Pipes AND TOBACCOS

Winter 1998

GERALD McRANEY
Pipe Smoking Thespian

MARK TWAIN

SAVINELLI

PIPEMAKING CONTEST RESULTS

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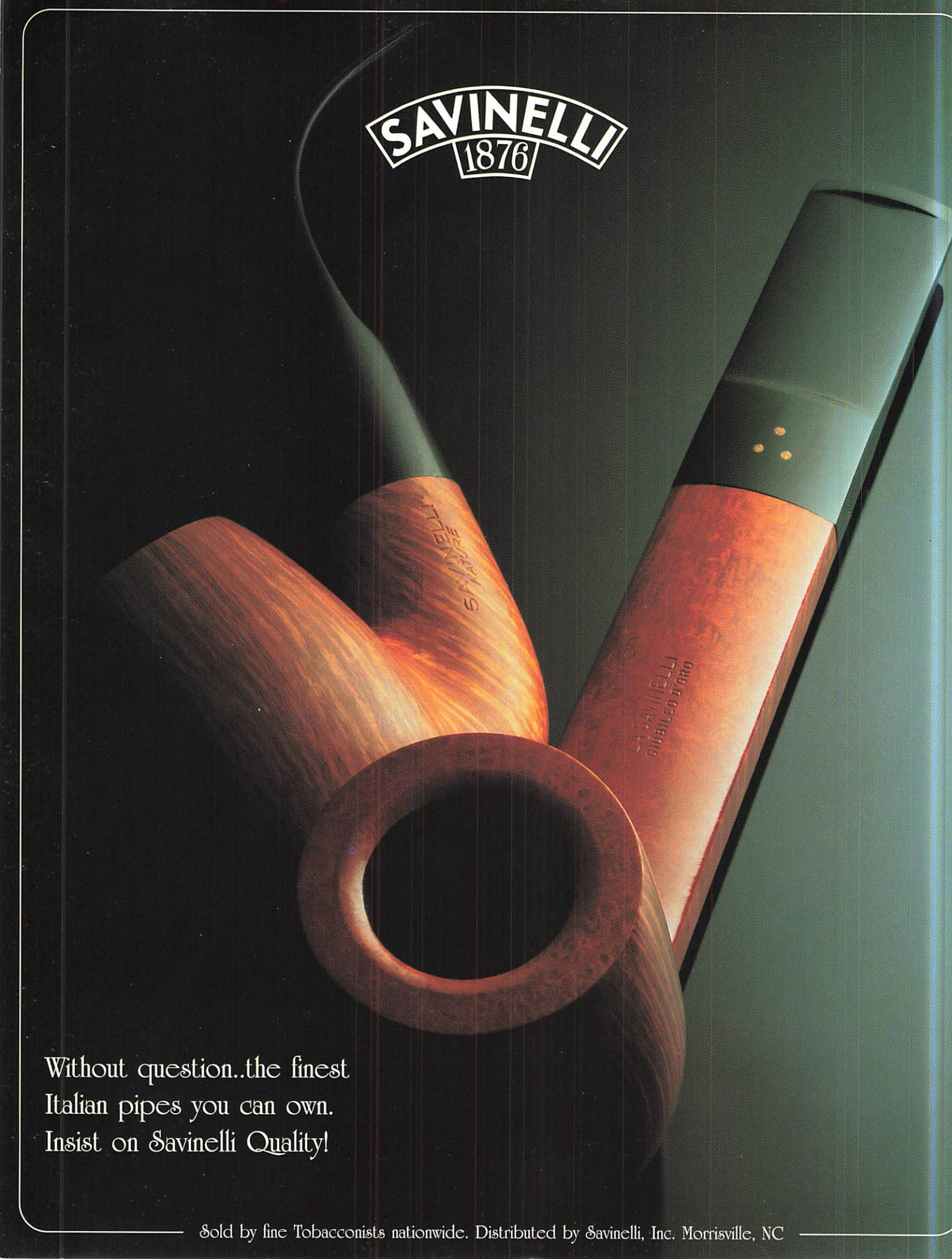

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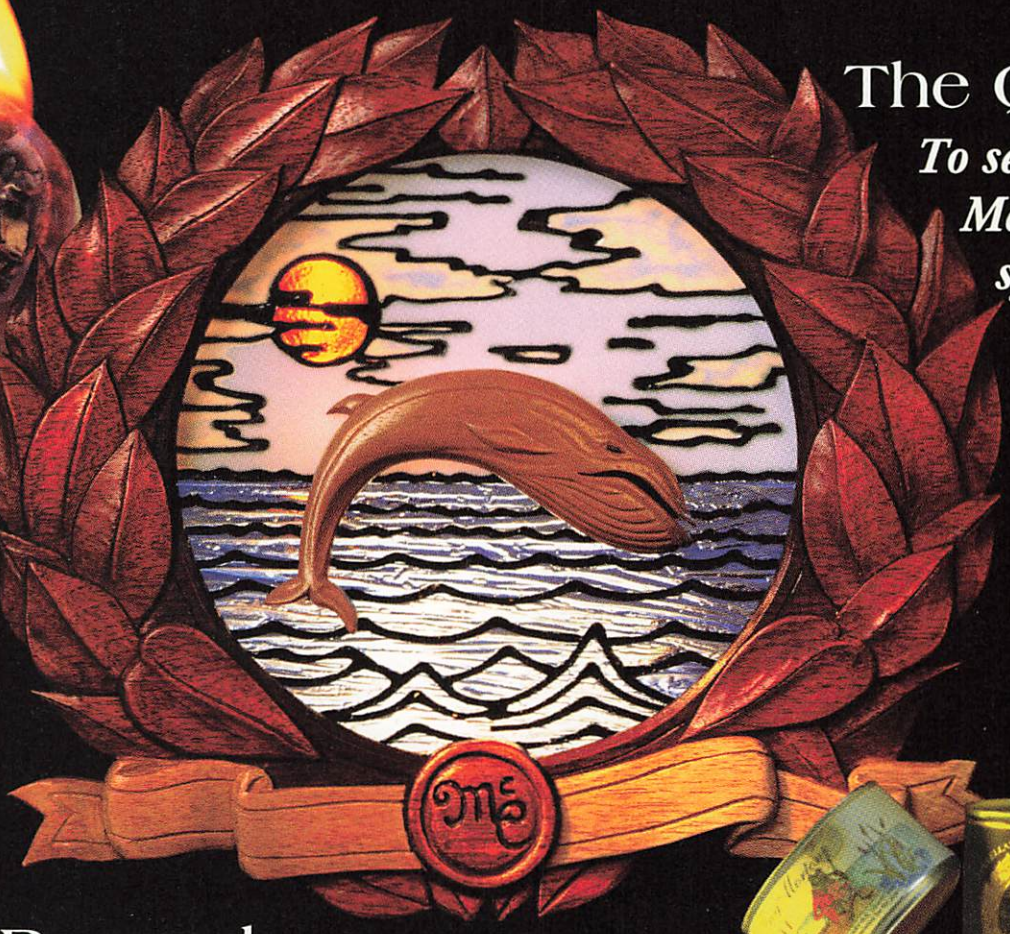

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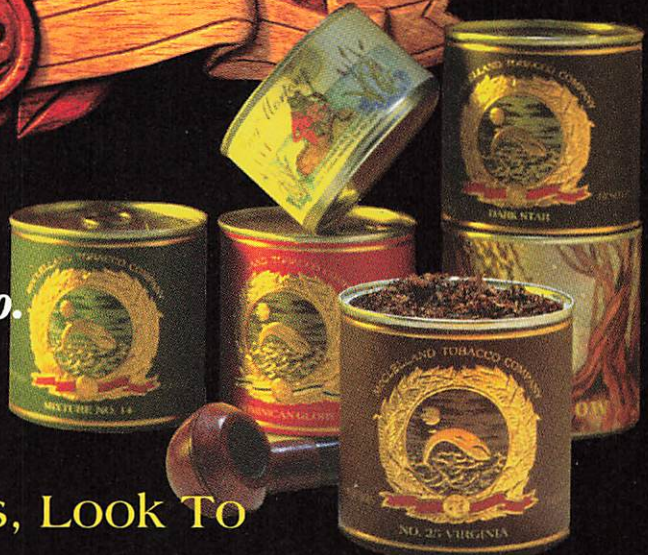

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A pipe smokers bridge to cigars.

Pipe smokers and cigar smokers have at least two things in common: Both enjoy the pleasure of a leisurely smoke, and both enjoy the variety of flavors which can only come from expertly blended tobaccos.

Many pipe smokers have found they can combine various flavor extracts with select tobaccos to create a variety of smoking experiences. These pipe smokers may now extend their pleasure to cigars thanks to the efforts of Jean Claude and Suzanne Marty who have found the perfect process to imbue cigar tobacco with the world's finest Cognac and Single Malt Scotch Whisky.

It has long been a delightful surprise to first discover the delicious harmony of flavors which is achieved by combining an exquisite hand rolled cigar and a sip of perfectly aged spirits. Indeed, many cigar enthusiasts have long used the literal method of immersing the head of their cigar into Cognac or Single Malt Whisky to achieve this flavor sensation. The problem with this emersion method, however, is that the flavors are typically inconsistent, usually weighing too heavily toward the spirits. Those who enjoy Cognac or Single Malt Scotch Whisky while smoking are just now learning how ingeniously the two can be combined.

Jean Claude and Suzanne dedicated four years of their lives to create the secret patented process used to imbue their cigars. For them, it was just as important to find the perfect blend of tobaccos as it was to find the perfect spirits. It was their objective that neither the tobacco blend or the spirits be predominant, rather that the two compliment each other.

Unlike many flavored cigars, El Sublimado and El Incomparable cigars are not sprayed or dipped after they are rolled. Each leaf in El Sublimado and El Incomparable cigars are treated prior to rolling. This pre-construction imbuing yields a delightful flavor which is consistent throughout the entire cigar.

As you can imagine, the time necessary to manufacture El Sublimado and El Incomparable cigars is considerably longer than their counterparts. While most cigars take two weeks to manufacture, El Sublimado and El Incomparable take over four months to complete. This extra time is necessary due to the additional manufacturing steps El Sublimado and El Incomparable must go through. In this day and time when cigar manufacturers are rushing to bring new cigars to market, it is encouraging to find a manufacturer who will not sacrifice quality for the sake of expediency.

It was not enough that Jean Claude and Suzanne found the proper spirits and tobaccos to accomplish their goal. They also wanted their cigars to smoke and burn with the consistency of a world class cigar. To accomplish this goal, Jean Claude and Suzanne employed the talents of the best cigar hand rollers they could find. Jean Claude and Suzanne's instructions to the rollers were "We want more than quality; we want perfection."

> *"We want more than quality; we want perfection."*

El Sublimado and El Incomparable are quality checked not only during manufacturing but also at the point of distribution. And as if this were not enough, Jean Claude and Suzanne offer a 100% Manufacturer's Quality Guarantee, even if some of the cigar has been smoked! It is obvious that Jean Claude and Suzanne want nothing less than for their cigars to be your favorite cigars.

Cigar connoisseurs and pipe smokers alike will find both pleasure and gratification in El Sublimado and El Incomparable premium luxury cigars. The passion which drove Jean Claude and Suzanne to painstaking levels can be savored in every draw of El Sublimado and El Incomparable. And the perfected bonding of tobacco and spirits will certainly outlive Jean Claude and Suzanne as their legacy.

You can learn even more about El Sublimado and El Incomparable cigars from Jean Claude and Suzanne's World Wide Web Site at **http://www.Sublimado.com.** Enjoy.

Music City Marketing, Exclusive USA Distributor
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An advertisement

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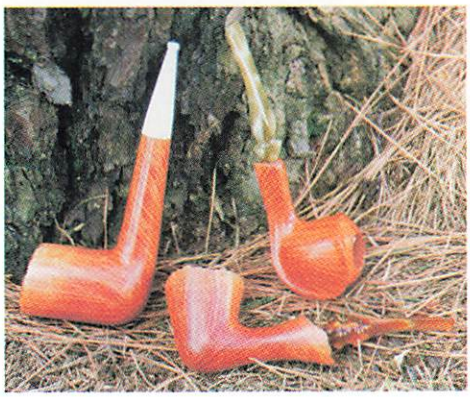

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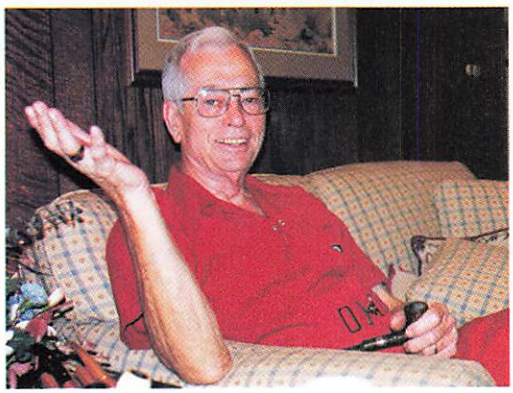

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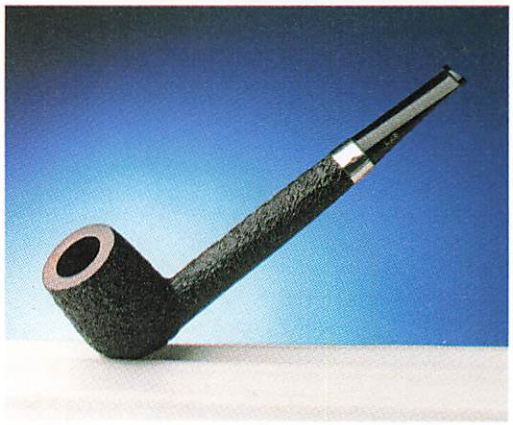

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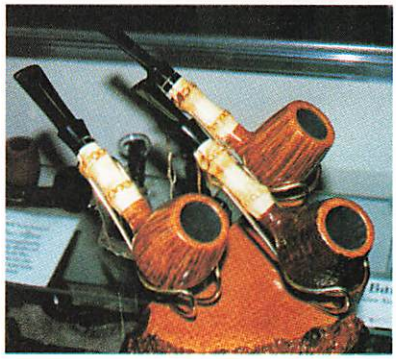

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Cover

Gerald McRaney smokes English blends in Italian pipes, attracted to both the full flavor of latakia and the ritual of pipe smoking.

Pipes AND TOBACCOS

A quarterly magazine celebrating pipes of all kinds and fine tobaccos.

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Pipes and tobaccos (USPS 015682) is published quarterly by SpecComm International, Inc., Suite 300, 3000 Highwoods Blvd., Raleigh, NC 27604-1029. Subscriptions: $12 a year domestic; $24 a year international. Perodicals Class postage paid at Raleigh, NC, and at additional mailing offices. Copyright © 1997 by SpecComm International, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this periodical may be reproduced without written consent of *Pipes and tobaccos*. For subscription information: Write to address below or call 919.872.5040. Postmaster: Send Form 3579 with address changes to *Pipes and tobaccos*, 3000 Highwoods Blvd., Suite 300, Raleigh, NC 27604-1029.

Printed in the USA.

We're just getting started

With the issue you now hold, *Pipes and tobaccos* completes two full years of production. It is our largest issue yet and, we hope, this increased size is merely a foreshadowing of things to come. An infinite number of great stories are yet to be covered.

People in the industry often ask us—in a tone generally reserved for sick friends—how we are doing. Because other pipe magazines have come and gone, they worry about us.

But there is no need for worry, because *Pipes and tobaccos* is doing great. Subscriptions continue to rise, circulation is up, and more and more people are discovering the joys of pipe smoking. Most new subscribers say they happened upon the magazine by accident. They say this as they call to order back issues—once they do know about us, they want everything available. But besides the growing readership and positive reinforcement, we are just plain having a great time!

With 1998 we will be offering more analysis of pipe tobaccos, with stories on blending companies highlighting the coverage. We are also excited to be welcoming Kevin Cook as a contributing columnist. Kevin will be writing a regular feature on different tobacco blends. His approach is qualitative, providing description more than assessment, and his column should be a valuable asset in helping you determine which new smoking mixtures to try.

As part of our reporting on tobaccos, we will be publishing an article on aging and cellaring your favorite blends. Does aging enhance and improve the smoking characteristics of tobacco? The answer is yes. Not all blends, but many, and our article will explain what to age and for how long.

We are pleased to report yet another development: the promotion of Chuck Stanion to Managing Editor of *Pipes and tobaccos*. Chuck is an enthusiastic pipe smoker, a fanatical collector and a terrific writer. If our mail is an accurate indicator, our readers like what Chuck has done so far, and we are confident that his talents will continue to enhance this publication.

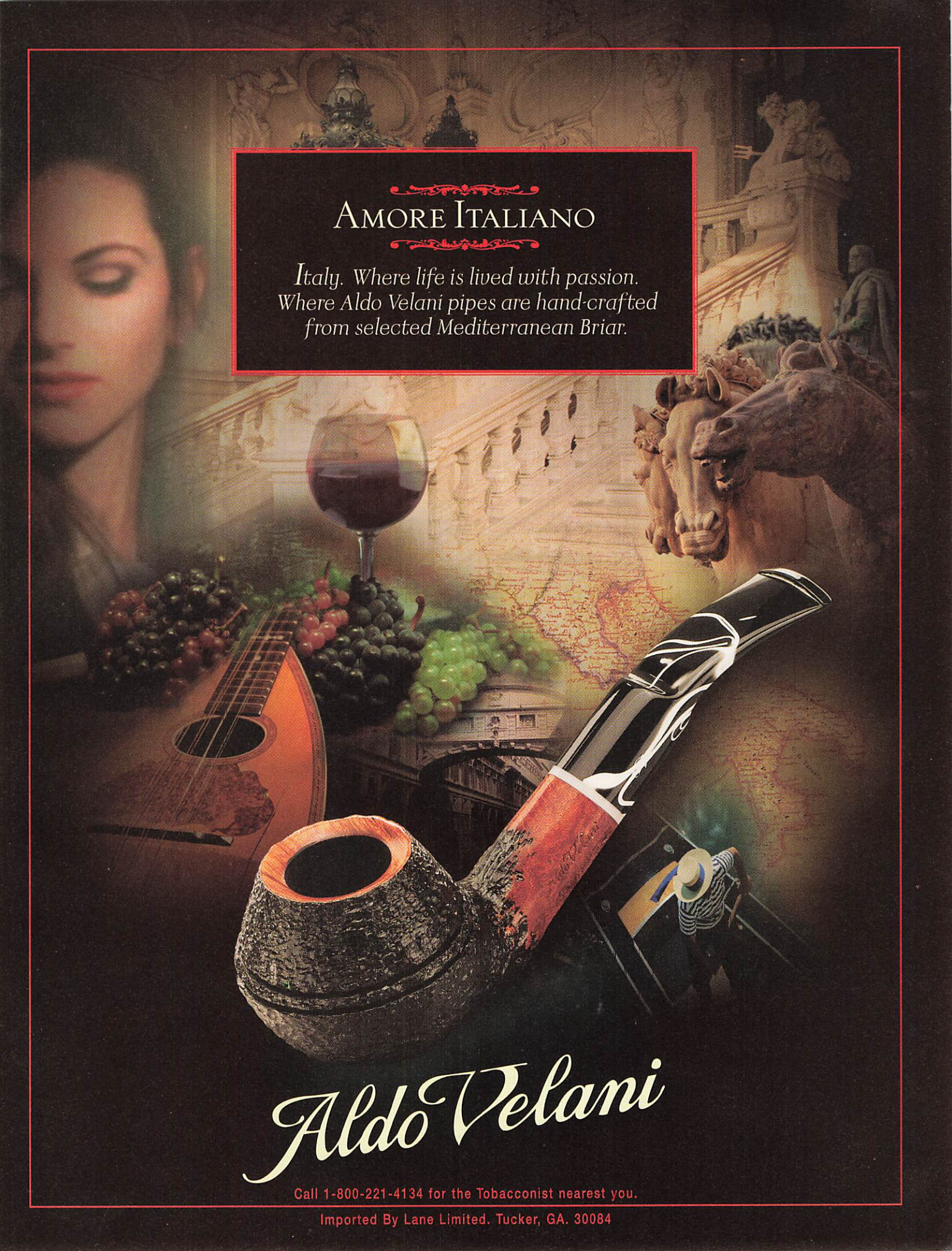
Your letters tell us you want to know more about carving techniques, about essential tools for the pipemaker, about particular craftsmen, about smoking techniques, about various smoking collectibles, about specific pipe companies, about, well, everything about pipes. And that's what we intend to provide: everything.

So stick around. We're just getting started.

Dayton H. Mathick

Stories in progress:

Germain & Son Tobaccos
Castello Pipes
Cornell & Diehl Tobaccos
Mark Tinsky, Pipemaker
Ed Burak, Pipe Designer
Frank Burla's Pipe Museum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P&T Readers Respond

Foote Notes

I was extremely pleased to find Larry O'Connor's interview with Shelby Foote ("Civil Discourse") in the new Fall '97 issue. I think Foote is a true Southern icon. Though he is most widely known for his epic Civil War historical trilogy, he is also considered by some to be one of the great Southern fiction writers of our time. I put him up there with William Faulkner.

Of course, it would be hard for any fiction writer from Mississippi to avoid being compared to the Great One, but Mr. Foote holds his own. In fact, I believe the two gentleman were friends. I understand that they even sat on the front porch of Rowan Oak (Faulkner's home) and smoked pipes together. Thank you for a great interview.

Keith Moore
Uptown's Smoke Shop
Nashville, Tennessee

P&T: You are absolutely right. Foote and Faulkner (right), the centennial of whose birth was recently celebrated, enjoyed a warm 25-year relationship that began with an unannounced visit by Foote and fellow writer Walker Percy to Faulkner's home. Foote, now 80, was just 25 or so at the time of that first meeting and had not yet embarked on his own career as a novelist.

Faulkner and Foote had another six or seven meetings over the years, during which times both men smoked their pipes constantly, recalls Foote. Foote remembers Faulkner smoking a variety of pipes, often standard Dunhill bulldogs, which he filled with tobacco from Dunhill in New York. Faulkner had what Foote calls "almost a phobia" about people using cigarette lighters to light their pipes, which Faulkner believed made the tobacco taste like gasoline.

Faulkner had few, if any, truly close friends, says Foote, but was not the cold man he is sometimes said to have been. Foote spent the night at Faulkner's home on at least one occasion and guided Faulkner on a tour of Shiloh, the Civil War battlefield that is the setting of one of Foote's novels. "I found him [Faulkner] to be exactly the opposite of what most people described him as—being surly and uncommunicative. He was an outgoing, friendly man. I think the people who found him distant wanted something from him or they wanted to pry into his private life. I never wanted either of those things and he knew it," says Foote.

All that jazz

Making the cover of *Pipes and tobaccos* ("In Search of the Genuine Article" Summer '97) was a very special surprise, but I was totally unprepared for the overwhelming reaction to your article from people who know me very well. My father, my sister, close musi-

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cian friends and others have all commented on the accuracy and sensitivity with which you presented my points of view. They all say you really nailed Kenny Blake. Thank you very much for your diligence and care.

Kenny Blake
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Hot tips

Your article on J.T. Cooke ("The road less traveled" Summer '97) inspired me to send a repair job his way. It came back looking better than ever and his invoice was half what he predicted. Thanks for directing me to him.

Robin Roberts
Cyberspace

Grandest compliments on *P&T*. After smoking a pipe for 17 of my 33 years, it's a pleasure to have a dedicated periodical. I wanted to note that I took advantage of Jim Benjamin's address in California ("Pipe cleaner extraordinaire" Summer '97). His workmanship and timeliness shows pride and classic dedication to his art.

James M. Cohen
Salem, Massachusetts

Stanion: Credit to human race

I want to commend you for sending Chuck Stanion to cover the New York Pipe Club Show. Chuck is an enthusiastic pipe smoker and collector and it really shows through his articles. He is a credit to your magazine and the hobby. Thank you ever so much for supporting our New York Pipe Club shows and the various other pipe shows throughout the country.

I must say that I really enjoy *P&T*. As a collector I am very pleased that you are printing in-depth articles about pipe companies and makers. I also enjoy your related feature articles, such as Chuck's piece on Mark Twain.

Richard Esserman
Passaic, New Jersey

Solo acts

Continued kudos on your fine magazine. I've especially enjoyed the articles on the one-man pipemakers (Julius Vesz in Spring '97 and J.T. Cooke in Summer '97). The one-man companies are where the average pipe smoker can usually get a fine pipe at a reasonable price (without the multiple distribution trail adding to the final retail price). I hope that you can do articles on Tim West from Ohio and Alberto Bonfiglioli from Bologna, Italy.

Kurt Trampel
Hoover, Alabama

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PIPE TOBACCO

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P&T: We share your admiration for the quality and craftsmanship of the many fine pipemaking soloists. And cutting out the middle man surely lowers costs. Larger pipemakers on the other hand have what economists call the economies of scale (volume materials buying, etc.) that can also lower costs.

So whether one deals with a large or small pipemaker, the knowledgeable consumer can usually get a good pipe at a reasonable price. The best way to become knowledgeable, of course, is to continue reading P&T.

By the way, an article on Bonfiglioli is in the works and one on West will undoubtedly make its way into a future issue.

Your neighborhood tobacconist

What a joy it was to find *Pipes and tobaccos* at my favorite newsstand! I took up the hobby of pipe-smoking in September 1996 out of curiosity. For years, I had enjoyed the wonderful aromas of other pipe smokers, so I decided to try it for myself. I was amazed. What a relaxing hobby!

My first pipe was a pre-smoked Dr. Grabow. After deciding that I enjoyed pipe smoking, I asked my local tobacconist for an education in selecting pipes and tobaccos. He was very patient with me, answering all my questions.

Since that day, I've bought two Peterson system pipes (being of Irish descent myself, they are my favorites), two meerschaums, and most recently, a gorgeous Stanwell freehand. I started out with vanilla aromatics, and these are still my favorites. I also have some English tobacco I enjoy from time to time.

Brian K. Donnelly
Manchester, New Hampshire

Heathen Swine

I will not be renewing my subscription for another year. *P&T's* not the problem. Your magazine is all right. Its articles are right up with the times.

But some slimeball broke into my office and stole about $100,000 of stuff. My 12 pipes, holding rack and humidor disappeared with other office stuff. Two of my special meerschaum pipes went along with the rest.

We got most of the stuff back, but the heathen swine smoked dope in all the pipes and ruined them. My old doc says to quit smoking, so now's as good a time as any.

Michael MacGhee
Pamona, California

P&T: We are sorry to hear of your misfortune. Slimeballs, heathens, swine and other such riffraff certainly are a continual source of irritation in modern society.

We wouldn't presume to intrude on your relationship with your doctor. But before you let the reprobate who stole your pipes also rob you of your cherished pastime, may we recommend the product "Slime-away" by Smith & Wesson? It comes in handy .38, .40 and .45 caliber containers and helps control or prevent all types of varmint infestation. One application is usually enough to clear the infested area of pipe thieves and other such miscreants.

Family traditions

I took up pipe smoking when I was 22 years old. I braved the criticism of my neighbors and my friends because I enjoyed the ritual so much. It gave me a feeling of closeness to my grandfather, who died before I was born but who smoked and honored his pipe collection and tobaccos.

Having started smoking pipes at such a young age, I wasn't able to find the company of peers with the same interest. Now I am 27, and I still bask in the relaxation of a good smoke. The difference is, I have found that company I have been searching for. That company is *P&T*. Your magazine adds another fine ingredient to this wonderful experience. My grandpa would be proud!!

Scott Whitesell
Battle Creek, Michigan

OK, I'm sold. thank you for a wonderfully peaceful magazine. My father smoked a pipe, and I think his father smoked a pipe. And I presently smoke a pipe.

For me, it's not about starting a new trend, or about doing what's in style because everyone is doing it. For me it's about carrying on a tradition from my

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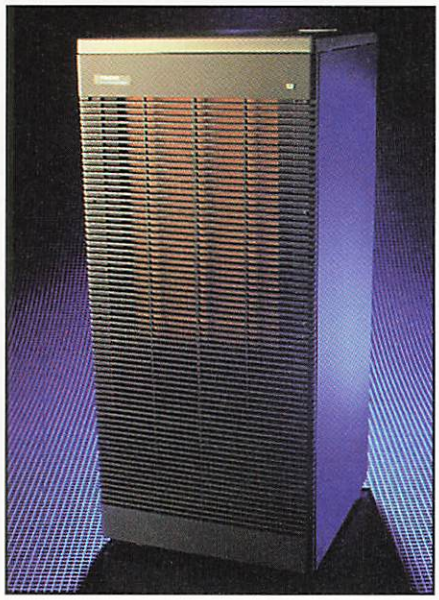

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New Readers Review

Wonderful magazine. I stumbled across several earlier editions of your magazine during recent visits to several local tobacconists in Salt Lake City. Although I've smoked a pipe on and off (more off than on) for about 10 years, I recently started again to cut back on the amount of cigarettes I smoke a day.

Your magazine is perfect for someone just starting to enjoy the pleasures of a pipe. The articles are great. I really didn't understand what some of the "terminology" meant for pipes, cigars and tobaccos, and reading *P&T* helps. Keep up the great work.

Ron Higashiyama
Salt Lake City, Utah

If the fall issue sent me of *Pipes and tobaccos* magazine is typical of other issues you publish, this magazine is well worth the money. The writing is quite good, the articles give worthwhile information, and most of the pipes portrayed are a delight to the eye. My check for $12.00 is enclosed.

John C. Dudley
Stanardsville, Virginia

What has happened to "Pipe Facts," the column written by Nikos Levin? I didn't see it in the summer issue. Mr. Levin seems like a knowledgable resource. Is he still with the magazine? Will his column be returning?

Crandall Mayholm
Cloudcroft, New Mexico

P&T: Nikos Levin is indeed a knowledgeable resource. His father, Barry Levin, became a monumental force in the pipes industry, adding immeasurably to the quality and popularity of pipe collecting. Nikos took over the family estate pipe business at his father's untimely death. He has written for Pipe Friendly, *been quoted by* Fortune *magazine, and the* Palm Beach Post *reported that he sold more estate pipes than any other business.*

However, Levin agreed to only one year as a guest columnist in P&T, *and having fulfilled that agreement, will not be returning. Specific pipe questions should now be addressed to "Ask Chuck," and the appropriate expert will be contacted to provide the answers.*

Male Chauvinist Pipe Pigs

I am a recent pipe smoker, finding solace in the pipe as opposed to cigarettes after my husband complained of the foul smell and my consuming addiction. Unfortunately, I feel like a woman doing something which is not accepted by public mores. In whole, I blame the industry—it is no coincidence that cigars have become fashionable while pipe smoking remains something for professorial, old or burly men.

The pipe industry should take some cues from the cigar marketeers. They sponsored events where they brought women to cigar parties, paid women and actresses to pose with cigars and now have ads in magazines directed at women cigar smokers.

Every issue of your magazine features men, markets to men, and uses the male gender in general reference to pipe smokers. This must change—pipe smoking should not be stereotyped and the industry should invest in marketing to change these perceptions.

Rebecca Valice
New York, New York

P&T: P&T *fully supports our female readers' right to enjoy a pipe. And anyone who would try to stop his woman or others from lighting up is quite clearly a sexist brute.*

As to your suggestion about the industry funding the change of perceptions through a mass marketing campaign, we would have to ask if you and other pipe smokers would be willing to pay for it through the resulting increase in the cost of pipe tobacco. We are afraid the consensus would be a resounding "no."

However, we would like to hear from as many women pipe smokers as would care to write. Maybe together we can find ways of promoting the acceptance of women pipe smokers.

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Willmer Pipes

Whatever happened to Willmer Pipes? I have a collection of six, ranging from AB quality to AAA, and they are my prized possessions, along with a perfect Peter Stokkebye, a beautiful Nording, and about 30 other good pipes. But I am curious about Willmer. I haven't seen one in a retail store in about 10 years.

Richard "Rick" Holden
Huntsville, Alabama

They are still around, although Hollco-Rohr—the American distributor—currently imports only two lines of Willmer pipes: the Willmer Bel Aire, which is a Bing Crosby-style pipe, and Willmer Lightweights. Bob Gardner, manager of the Santa Monica Tinder Box, reports that your AB is a lower-grade Willmer, while your AAA is a very high grade, if not the highest. In the late 1980s Willmer changed its grading system, adding AAAA and AAAA Presentation grades, where the previously highest grade was AAA.

Benjamin's Age

The Summer 1997 issue was, as always, excellent. But I do have some problems with your arithmetic. If Jim Benjamin ("Pipe Cleaner Extraordinaire") was nine years old in 1932, he was born in 1923, making him 74 some time this year. But if he "took up pipes seriously when he was 16 and has been smoking them ever since—for 65 years" he is 81.

Thomas P. Breen, Jr.
McHenry, Illinois

You're right; something is amiss. Math was never my strong point, but I'll see what I can do....

Let's just average things out for clarification: Benjamin was nine in 1932, born 1923, the article was written in 1997...1932+1923+1997 = 5852...but his various ages are reported as...74+16+81 = 171...divide the year by the age... hmmm...5852 ÷ 171 = 34...yeah, that looks good. So Jim Benjamin is an average of 34 years old. Simple.

You know, now that I look back at the photos accompanying that article, he looks a little older. Hang on, I better give Jim a call.

[Insert Musak]

OK, Jim says he started smoking "in earnest" in 1940. It's the "been smoking for 65 years" figure that's throwing us off. He smoked a variety of things starting in 1932—pencil shavings, bugs, roots, carpet remnants, mullet—but it was 1940 when he really hit his stride with tobacco. So, to clarify, he has officially been smoking for only 57 years—not 65—and he is now 74 years old.

Sail Tobacco

Could you possibly find a source where I could purchase Sail pipe tobacco in the Black Pouch? I think it comes in three blends, but it is the black blend that I am after.

Michael Corba
Black Mountain, North Carolina

Sail pipe tobacco is distributed by Consolidated Cigar Corp, 600 Perdue Ave., Richmond, VA 23224, 804.233.7668, and Arango Cigar Co., 8030 N. Central Park, Skokie, IL 60076, 847.982.0055. Ask your local tobacconist to give one of these distributors a call to order some for you.

A Short Smoke

I've been a pipe smoker for nearly 11 years now. I began when I was a senior in high school. Well, now I'm a graduate student (studying cardiovascular physiology, if that's not ironic) and have "graduated" from Dr. Grabow and drugstore tobaccos to better made pipes and some very nice English blends. Unfortunately, my days are quite busy and I rarely have more than 15-20 minutes between classes (attending or teaching) to enjoy a bowl. I've tried ultra-light pipes with smaller bowls (such as King's Cross) but even they smoke for 30+ minutes. Will I damage my larger pipes (Peterson, Barling, etc.) if I load only half the bowl and smoke just that much? I find that if I load them full and allow them to extinguish after 15 minutes, when I relight that tobacco a few hours later (during my next break) the tobacco has a sour taste. Any suggestions would be greatly appreciated.

Albert N. Swafford, Jr.
Mobile, Alabama

My first impulse was to say, Avoid filling your pipes only halfway except very occasionally. Good thing I didn't have any confidence in myself and decided to call J.T. Cooke about it. He says it is much better for your pipe to fill it halfway than to start with a full pipe and smoke only half. The heat generated is safer in the lower part of the bowl—especially for short durations. Just keep the pipe reamed properly and you should be fine.

I have good luck, when leaving a partially-smoked pipe for a couple of hours, with just keeping a pipe cleaner inserted in the stem. First I run pipe cleaners through until they come out clean, then just leave a clean one in to absorb any moisture that might accumulate before I come back to it. It can still turn your mouth inside out if you leave it overnight, but for short durations it works for me.

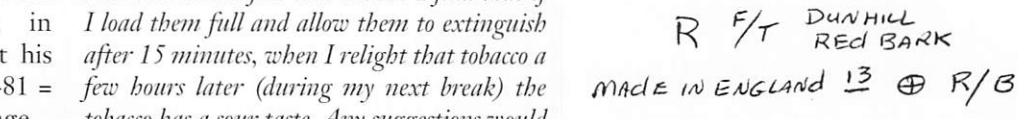
I mentioned this technique to Cooke when we were discussing your letter, and he thought it acceptable, but he goes one step further when he leaves his pipe for a while: He dips the pipe cleaner in grain alcohol. "We're talking a very minuscule amount of alcohol here," he says. "Dip just the very tip of the cleaner, and then ring it out so it's almost dry before inserting it. As the alcohol evaporates, moisture from the tobacco is drawn into the pipe cleaner."

Another option is to find smaller pipes. Tim West offers a line called "Sidewalk Smokers," named after the people who hang out on the sidewalk for their 10-minute cigarette breaks. These are quality, handcarved pipes with small bowls that will smoke for five to 15 minutes. They range in price from $25 to $45.

Any retailer can order directly from West for you.

Dunhill Markings

I have a Dunhill marked as follows:



Wonder if you could tell me about this pipe.

Don Davis
Long Beach, California

Richard Esserman, a longtime Dunhill collector, dates your pipe at 1973, which is found by adding the underlined 13 to the year 1960. You did not mention the shape of the pipe, but Esserman says the first R probably indicates that it is a pot shape. The F/T stands for fishtail, which is the

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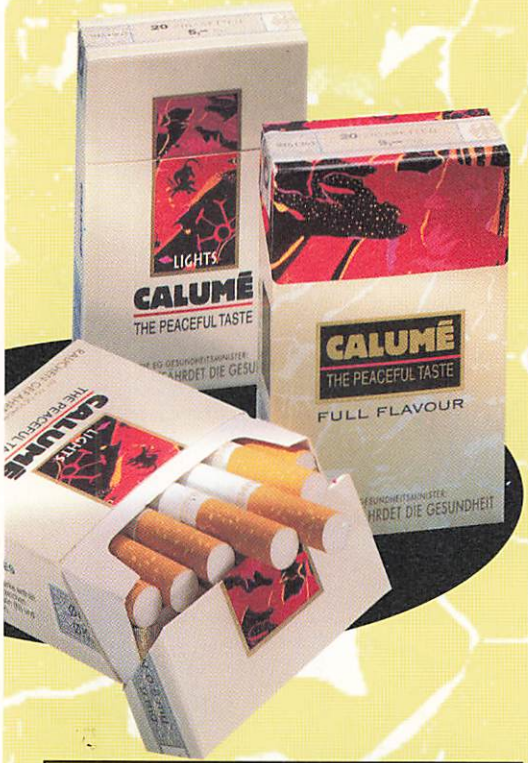

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Die EG-Gesundheitsminister: Rauchen gefährdet die Gesundheit. Der Rauch einer Light Zigarette dieser Marke enthält 0,5 mg Nikotin und 9 mg Kondensat (Teer). Der Rauch einer Full Flavour Zigarette dieser Marke enthält 0,8 mg Nikotin und 14 mg Kondensat (Teer). (Durchschnittswerte nach ISO.)

shape of the mouthpiece. The "R/B" stands for Red Bark.

Falcon Pipes

In the Spring issue of Pipes and tobaccos, *on page 5, there is an ad for Falcon Pipes and Filters. Can you supply an address for ordering bowls and stems for these pipes and the filters?*

Robert McKinney
Georgetown, Ohio

You'll need to find a local tobacconist that carries Falcon Pipes and supplies, as they are not available directly to consumers from the distributor. However, Phillips & King Cigar Co., which distributes Falcon Pipes, may be able to tell you the shop nearest you that carries them. Or you can just ask your local pipe shop to contact Phillips & King and place an order for you. Phillips & King may be contacted at 18021 Cortney Ct., City of Industry, CA 91748. Telephone: 818.810.9811.

Online Pipe Info

I look forward to each issue of Pipes and tobaccos. *Fantastic magazine. Wondering if you have a Web site. Can I find anything on the Internet pertaining to pipes and pipe tobaccos, collectors or just anything concerning pipe smokers?*

Gary Spiegel
submitted via email

The *Pipes and tobaccos* Web page is located at *http://home.pt-magazine.com/pt-mag/*. It shows the current cover, offers a sample article from the current issue, and has a few other neat things.

But the best starting place on the Web for pipe information is the pipes Web page at *http://www.pipes.org/*. This site, put together by Steve Masticola and Steve Beaty, has links to information on just about any question you might have concerning pipes.

Stay Indoors

I have a situation I hope you can help me with.

I'm originally from Dallas, Texas, though I can't divulge my current location, for reasons you will soon understand. Thirty-four years ago I was happy, newly married, and my life was perfect—except that my bride did not care for the smell of my pipe tobacco. So I was accustomed to going for a stroll to enjoy my pipe.

I had just lit my Peterson system pipe and was walking along after a pleasant rain on a peaceful grassy knoll, getting ready to watch a parade of some sort that was rolling by on a nearby street. I was concentrating on being sure the Dunhill's Standard Mixture Medium I always smoke was well lit, when I heard three gunshots in quick succession—within, say, 5.6 seconds or so. It scared and surprised me, and I involuntarily inhaled a great lungful of smoke, and gave out a loud, explosive cough accompanied by a puff of smoke that floated up over my head. I soon recovered, hearing shouts of "The President's been shot!" and "Look! On the grassy knoll! The gunman!" People were pointing at me! People were coming up the slope toward me!

I panicked. I jumped a nearby picket fence and ran. I hid. Police were everywhere; I didn't know what to do.

I slept in doorways and appliance cartons for three nights, and when I finally had the courage to go home, I found that my apartment was occupied by a complete stranger who claimed he had lived there for years.

I knew it was the work of the government. The CIA, to enhance the confusion surrounding the assassination investigation, had undoubtedly erased my identity and disposed of my wife to communicate that I should keep my mouth shut. I never saw my bride again.

So my question is, do you know of a tobacco that is more acceptable to women than Standard Mixture Medium? I'm about to get remarried, and don't want to go through that again.

Anonymously submitted

Let this be a lesson to all wives who do not tolerate their husbands smoking in the house.

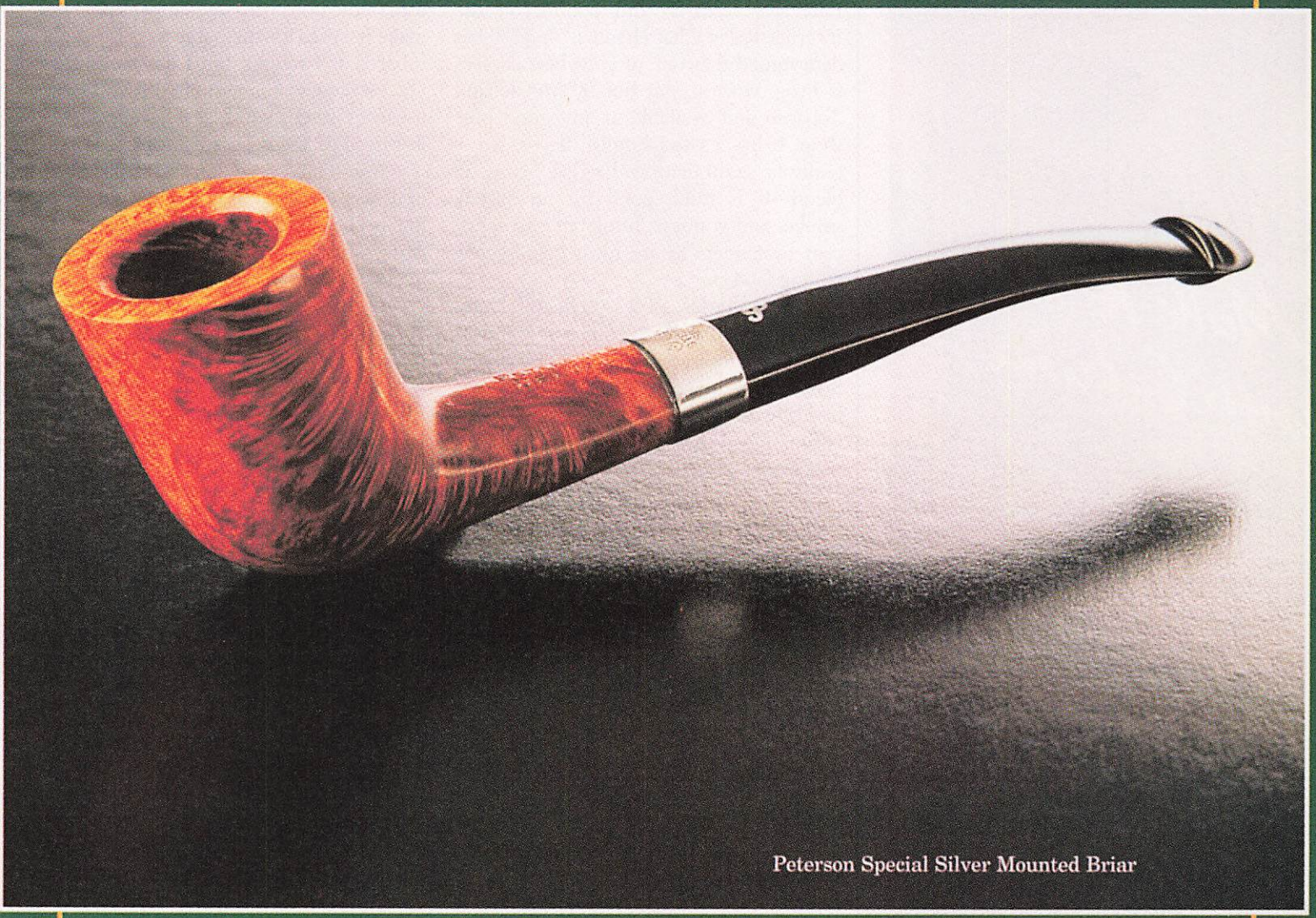
The next letter echoes your question...

Taste and Aroma

Ever since I first started smoking a pipe (about five years ago), I've smoked aromatics. Unfortunately, that's the only way I can still smoke my pipe in the house. (And my wife's still not thrilled with that!) I once tried some tobaccos called "Old London," "Old London, Virginia Flake," and "Presbyterian Mixture," which I'd bought while in London. Let's just say that after smoking those brands in my home, I was thankful that I hadn't yet taught my wife how to shoot a gun.

I have read in magazines and on the Web about various tobaccos (I hear Dunhill's name mentioned a lot, as well as some others) whose aroma is described as "sweet" or "pleasant."

PETERSON OF DUBLIN



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ASK CHUCK

Are there tobaccos offered that are not full English, yet more robust than aromatics, while retaining a good aroma?

John B. Hill
Research Triangle Park, North Carolina

Extensive research and polling on the Internet Relay Chat channel "#pipes" has determined that one of your best choices is Frog Morton, put out by McClelland Tobacco and available at any good pipe shop. It has a good English flavor, but is really a combination English/aromatic blend. It is mild, good for an all-day smoke, and is not as intolerable to innocent bystanders as are most blends containing latakia.

Craig Tarler, of Cornell and Diehl (800.433.0080), also blends some appropriate possibilities, including Brigadier, Sweet English and Tradewinds. These are basically English blends with subtle flavoring added to help override the distinktive aroma of latakia.

Smoking Method

Regarding the Summer 1997 issue: I was distraught to learn that unless more letters came in, you would be shipped off to Java (probably locked in a slatted wooden crate), to cover the native pipe club, our, ahem, benign brethren, "The Screaming Face Beaters." Hence, this submission.

Here is a method I've found helpful in keeping that last quarter inch of tobacco burning, a problem discussed in detail in your summer column.

When, after repeated lightings, the pipe keeps going out:

1. Tamp down the remaining tobacco.

2. Turn the bowl upside down and let loose ash fall out by gravity only—don't poke out the ash.

3. With the scraper end of your tamper, work down to the bottom of the bowl and lift up the tobacco at the bottom and mix and turn the entire contents, tobacco and ash. The wet tobacco should no longer be concentrated on the bottom, having mixed with the dry ash.

4. Tamp and light up.

Using this method, I have gotten another 15 minutes or so of smoking, sweet, with perhaps no or only one relighting. I smoke a black cavendish that can get very wet at the bottom of the bowl, but the method still works.

Harvey Silver
Forest Hills, New York

The problem I've found with this method is that you sometimes get ash in your mouth; and even without that indignity, the flavor of the tobacco is significantly impaired when mixed with ash. I will sometimes loosen the tobacco in the bottom of the bowl with my tamper's poker to make it easier for the flame to get into the tobacco as I relight, but I don't mix it all up. Perhaps your method will work with tobaccos other than those I have tried. We just need to keep experimenting.

And, Harvey, you do the magazine an injustice when you insinuate it would send me to Java locked in a slatted wooden crate, when everyone knows that a canvas mailbag is so much more economical.

Restamped Dunhills

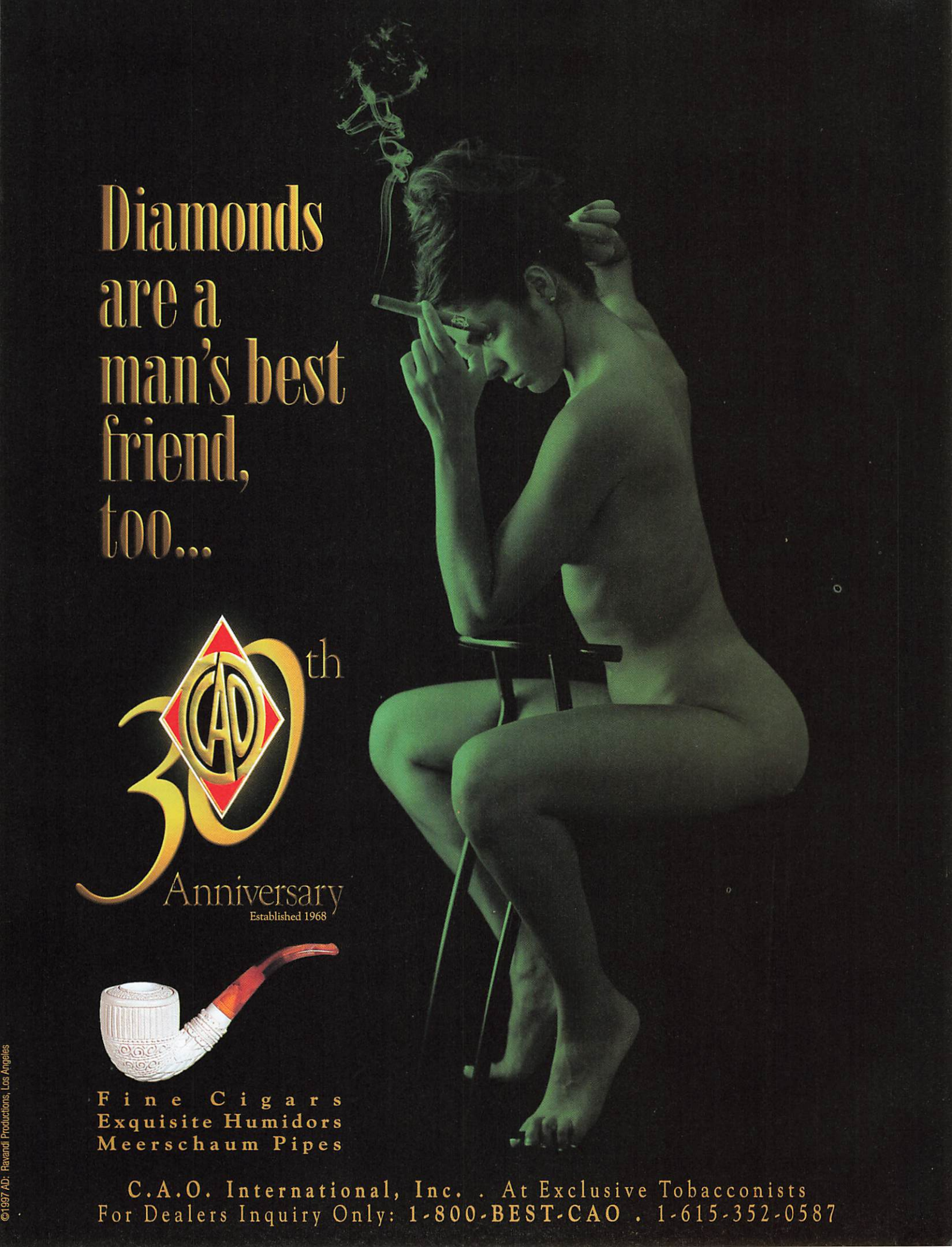
I have seen a few Dunhill pipes with restamped nomenclature. What is the reason for this and does the restamping have an impact on the value to collectors?

Bruce Harris
via email

"Restamped nomenclature" sounds like what my grandfather once did to me when he caught me smoking his favorite Charatan in my treehouse. I don't recollect exactly, but I think he said, "Get down here and I'll restamp your nomenclature for you, you whelp!" The memory is somewhat vague, though it was only last week. Guess the restamping was a proficient one.

But since, clearly, I know nothing on this subject, I took your question to an expert: Robert C. Hamlin, who is currently writing a book on Dunhill nomenclature. (We'll let you know when his book becomes available.) Here is Hamlin's response:

> Well, saying that the pipe has been restamped *by the factory*, it may have been done for a number of reasons including repair, a refurbishing of the total pipe or a "problem" with the original stamps—either in error or because they were incomplete.
>
> Beware of restamps and make sure that they were done by Dunhill only—otherwise the total product is suspect. Factory work will have documentation as far as charges paid, shipping dates, etc. Without these papers to go with an obviously restamped pipe, yes, it does raise



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questions as to the heritage of the pipe, including whether or not it is authentic.

Keep in mind that a "double stamp," when the stamp has a slight double image, would not be considered a restamp and would not affect the value.

Final point: If you buy a pipe to smoke it and not to foolishly "invest" in its futures market, don't worry about the stamping. Just enjoy it.

Buffer Speed

I have been soliciting opinions on the optimal horsepower and rpm for the motor on a buffing wheel. Please advise what is best.

James J. Trepanier, Esq.
via email

Randy Wiley recommends 1,725 rpm with a 9-inch buffing wheel, and says the horsepower isn't important. "But," he says, "one-third or one-half horsepower should be sufficient for a hobbyist." He also advises that a capacitor motor be used, so that it will start with the load of a buffing wheel without burning out the motor too quickly.

J.T. Cooke also recommends 1,725 rpm ("I use 3,450, but that takes a lot of practice," he says), with wheels no larger than 10 or 12 inches. "And please," he adds, "tell people to leave their stems on the pipes when they polish them. The biggest mistake the home hobbyist makes is taking off the stems." It is better to mask off the shank of the pipe to protect the wood, and polish the stem as part of the pipe—"no matter how often you have to replace the tape." This method will prevent a rounding of the stem where it meets the pipe. "I've replaced a lot of stems because people round out the stem face with buffing wheels."

Appropriate Smoking Choice

I'm planning to dispose of my mother-in-law, and need some advice.

I think I'll toss her into a nice deep pit of quicksand located on our property. My main concern is, What is the best combination of pipe and tobacco to smoke for such an occasion? I want everything to be perfect, since I'll only be able to do this once.

Anonymously submitted

This is a very serious matter, and I beg you to consider carefully the consequences. It is still illegal in some states to kill your mother-in-law, and should your act be discovered, you may be imprisoned—possibly for months. Given the current anti-smoking political climate, you may not be allowed to have your pipe during your incarceration—and no mother-in-law, regardless of how exasperating, is worth risking the loss of your pipe.

However, if your course is decided, there are a number of factors to weigh—including your mother-in-law. How heavy she is will determine how long it takes her to sink. If she is typical, she has about the same dimensions and mass as a 22 cubic foot upright refrigerator, which would be completely submerged in only four minutes. That's hardly worth lighting your pipe for. May I suggest furnishing her with a life preserver, by way of prolonging her buoyancy? This will give you ample opportunity to savor the experience.

For your smoking pleasure I suggest a very high-grade pipe with good tactile stimulation. Grain is unimportant, since your vision will be occupied elsewhere. Perhaps a Castello Sea Rock, which has a terrific cragginess. But make sure it is well broken in. You do not want a hot smoke to interfere with the event.

As for the tobacco: something deep and rich, but not so lulling as to make you lose interest in the festivities. You will want a tobacco that is relaxing—to offset the final nagging you are sure to be listening to. But it must also have an engaging piquancy, so that it enhances without overshadowing the event. My personal choice would be either Cornell and Diehl's Yale mixture or Esoterica's Margate.

Now some may say these are too rich, too intoxicating for your purpose, and that Esoterica's Penzance or McClelland's Mixture #8 would be better. An advantage in Penzance and #8 is that they provide a little less density of smoke, and are therefore less likely to obscure your view. But if it was my mother-in-law, I would lean toward a more luxurious blend. ***P&T***

Ask Chuck is written by Managing Editor Chuck Stanion. The column reflects both research and opinion. We welcome questions, comments and disagreements, all of which may be sent to: Ask Chuck, P&T, 3000 Highwoods Blvd., Suite 300, Raleigh, NC 27604-1029. Fax: 919.876.6531. Email: CStanion@juno.com.

Pipe Mechanic

Mechanical aptitude and a natural inventiveness make this pipemaker a success

by Chuck Stanion

Clarence Mickles oozes sensible practicality. His shop—a reconfigured garage behind his home in Park Forest, Illinois—is neat, streamlined, organized, almost Spartan. "Yeah," he laughs. "But you should have seen it before I cleaned it up! What a mess!"

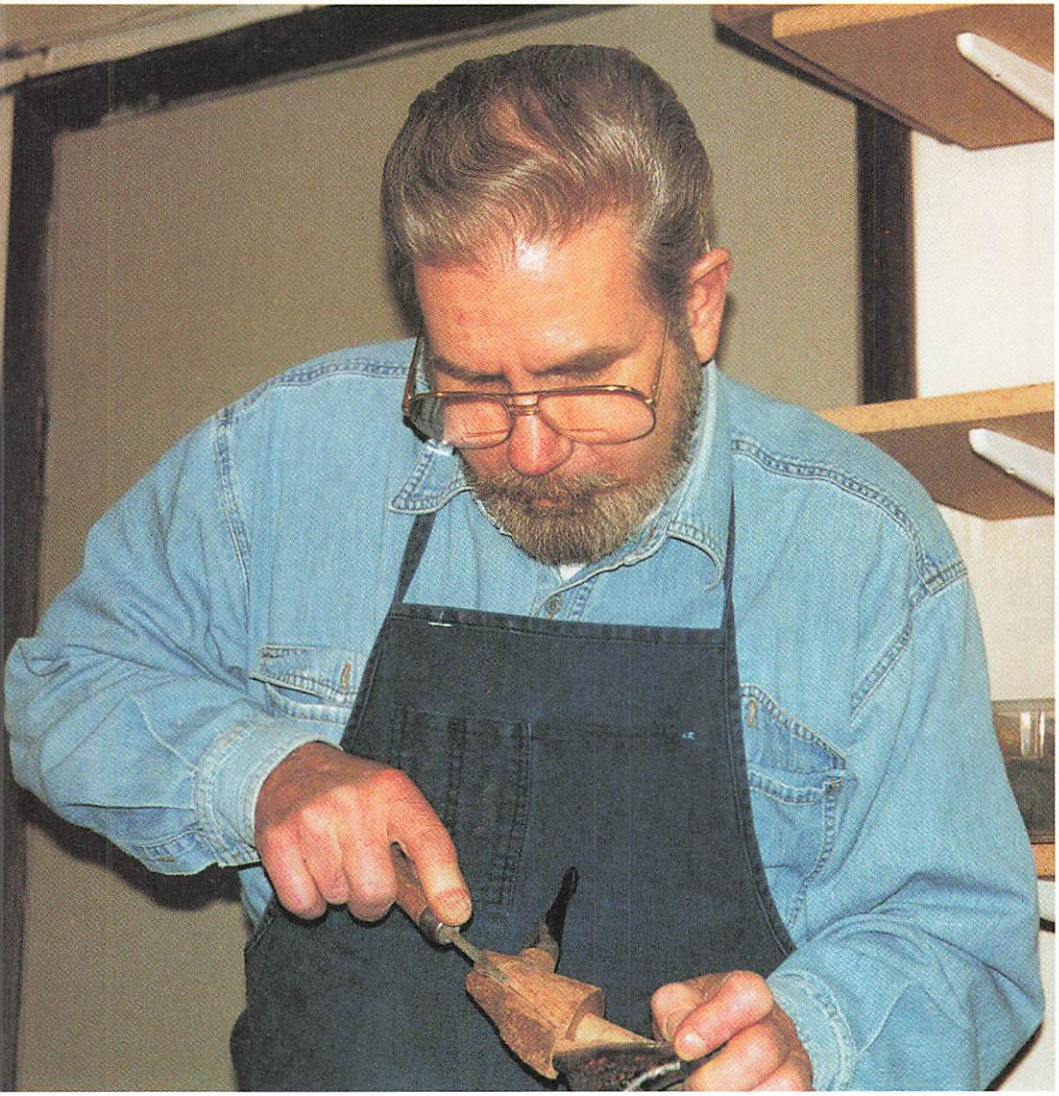
Except for his decision three years ago to quit his job as an auto mechanic and become a full-time pipemaker, he seems the embodiment of rationality. "This is the first year," Mickles says, "that I made any money at this. But it's finally starting to come together."

The change was a personal—if not a financial—triumph for Mickles. "I wasn't happy working on cars," he says. "And I enjoyed making pipes. At that time I was 58 years old. I figured it was time I did something I wanted to do." One day he just found himself packing all his tools back in his toolbox and rolling it out the door—no two weeks' notice, no nothing. He just quit.

Mrs. Mickles was surprised to see him home in the middle of the day. "She about had a heart attack," says Mickles. But she accepted it, and started helping out with the phone, taking orders, doing the paperwork, the shipping and receiving. "She takes care of the business," says Mickles. "I get to do the fun part. All I do is come out here and make the pipes."

He had been making pipes since 1976, but could now devote himself full time to what had formerly been a part-time passion.

It seems like a frightening proposition to take on a new career at age 58, but Mickles doesn't see it that way. "I knew I could make good pipes," he says. "I wanted to make good pipes. It was time to start making good pipes." ►



He had actually already been making good pipes for years, selling them himself at pipe shows since 1982. But now he could really devote himself.

His pipemaking was actually a result of his inherent practicality. "I liked nice pipes, but I couldn't afford them," he says. "But I could afford to make them myself." So he did.

When he took a couple of his pipes into the local smoke shop, years ago, the owner was impressed and talked Mickles into doing pipe repairs and refurbishing for the shop. Mickles also started to meet and talk with some of the pipe collectors in the Chicago area—Herm Schobel, for example, and later people like Frank Burla, Rex Poggenpohl, Chuck Rio, Ed Lehman—and by listening to their advice was able to improve his pipemaking quickly and efficiently.

And the creativity Mickles was denied in auto repair was able to assert itself in his pipemaking. He started experimenting more recently with filter and dry-system

Mickles has developed several different rustication styles, all performed with tools he designs and builds himself. Center, the most complex electric device in his shop is a lathe he fashioned from a motor bought second-hand for $3.50. The pipe below, with gold band, horn stem and custom pipe stand, was made by Mickles specifically for Chicago's International Pipe and Cigar Show silent auction.

designs, and was able to devise some striking innovations.

In one design, he fashions the tenon so that a pipe cleaner may be wrapped around it, acting as a filter to absorb excess moisture. Instead of buying filters that block the airway, with Mickles' design the smoker can change the system out with materials readily at hand.

Mickles also has a pipe with a built-in carburetor—perhaps a result of his car repair experiences. (He does claim that everything reminds him of pipes.) In this design the tenon is widened with a number of holes in it to disperse the smoke. "It smokes like ice," claims Mickles. "It's kind of a pain to clean, but what a great smoke."

But his most inspiring innovation in dry systems is similar to that in Peterson system pipes. The Peterson system provides a reservoir to collect moisture; however, when that reservoir fills up, the pipe must be taken apart so that it can be emptied—a pipe cleaner cannot be inserted into the well. In Mickles' design, a pipe cleaner inserted into the mouthpiece travels directly into the reservoir, where it can absorb all the collected moisture without interrupting a smoker's enjoyment of the pipe.

Although Mickles would probably never think of it, his friends and admirers watch out for him. Ed Lehman has filed initial documentation with the patent office to protect Mickles' inventions. Mickles is just so engrossed in making practical and useful pipes that he doesn't think about ensuring the credit for himself.

His innovations carry over to his tools as well. Mickles likes to boast about his total stake in pipemaking tools. "Everything in this shop," he says, "adds up to a total investment of $5." His most expensive piece of equipment is his "poor man's lathe," which is a basic electric motor he bought for $3.50.

His other tools are equally simple. His tobacco chambers are drilled with inexpensive woodworking paddle bits that he grinds to the dimensions he wants. For carving rough surfaces on his pipes, he has devised a wooden handle with four sharpened concrete nails firmly attached.

Without doubt, however, the most impressive tools in Mickles' shop—aside from his quick mind and ingenuity—are his own hands. They are gnarled, calloused, troll-like hands. They look like they could catch shrapnel out of the air, like they could pull rivets out of sheet metal, like they could twist nails into wood screws. When he holds a pipe in those hands and starts scraping a rustication tool down its side, it moves no more than if it were clamped in an industrial vise.

So that $5 is perhaps his total cash investment, but the sweat factor is another matter. He often works 16-hour days, and reinvests most of the money that comes in from his pipemaking, repair and refurbishing.

Mickles' refurbishing services ac-

count for about 50 percent of his total business. He has regular accounts with 25 retail stores that send him pipes for repair and restoration on a weekly basis, but prefers the work he receives from individual pipe smokers who also send him pipes for difficult repairs. He charges $10 to $25, "depending on how bad they are." His turnaround time for repair/restoration is typically one week.

He is also finding that special-order pipes are becoming more popular. "Guys will send me a pipe," he says, "and ask me to make one just like it, or a little different, or with a different finish. It's happening a lot more than it used to." But sometimes special orders can be frustrating. "Orders for straight grains are a nightmare," says Mickles. "You might make 50 or 100 pipes before you get one. All the pipes with minor flaws have to be carved, but if it's an unpopular shape—that maybe only this one guy likes—what are you supposed to do with all those custom carved pipes?" Freehands are his favorite. "You can follow the wood with freehands," he says. "I like the briar to tell me what kind of pipe it should be."

He has a number of carved finishes, but doesn't have specific names for the different styles. They range from something that looks like a sandblast but is achieved by carving and then wire-brushing the bowl ("I guess you might call it a handblast," says Mickles), to deep, craggy, incredibly rough and complex finishes. He is also adept at matching the distinctive finishes of such makes as Castello and Don Carlos.

Mickles' pipes themselves are the finest testimony to their maker's originality. They feature remarkable bone and briar stems, as well as handcarved lucite and vulcanite. Some sport gold or silver bands. Others are intricately carved in a realistic corncob finish ("those are very popular," says Mickles).

There are also calabashes, and Mickles has done some work with staining the gourd to look like briar—a stunning effect. The finished briars display extraordinarily polished surfaces. "That's my carnauba wax," says Mickles. "I heat the wax and add silicone, then let it harden and apply the combination. It lasts longer than plain carnauba."

The logos on Mickles' pipes have changed several times since he started pipemaking full time. The first logo he used was a briar dot. "That was in '93 or '94," he says. "Then I went to a briar cross, but that was a lot of work." That logo lasted only a little more than a month. Next was a blue bar, then a large white dot. And finally he started using two small white dots implanted in the stem, which is what he still uses today. "That's the one everybody seems to like best," he says. "I'll probably keep that logo."

Older Mickles pipes have the Mickles hand-scrolled signature on the shanks, but in 1996 that was changed to a block-letter "MICKLES," with the year of manufacture and "USA" stamped on the pipes. No grading system or other price indicators are added to the pipes. "Carved pipes start at $125," says Mickles, "and smooths go up to $250. That's the whole range, and it just depends on the grain and how much time I put into the pipe. Now, if something fabulous comes along, I'll charge more. But I haven't seen one yet."

But since everything he looks at reminds him of pipes and gives him new ideas for designs, fabulous pipes are sure to come about. The pipe he made for the silent auction for the Chicagoland Pipe Show looks pretty fabulous, but Mickles doesn't give himself much credit.

"I got the idea for that pipe in a gas station men's room," he says, laughing. "It was on the way home from the New York Pipe Show. I was sitting there in the john, and found myself looking at the swirls in the linoleum. And I said, 'There's a pipe in there!' Came home and made it."

Now if we can get Mickles to visit the Louvre, we may see some pipes that make history. *P&T*

P&T Pipecarving Contest

"Beauty is something wonderful and strange that the artist fashions out of the chaos of the world in the torment of his soul."
—W.S. Maugham

The response to our pipecarving contest was enormous. Photos poured in from all over the country: 129 official entries and scores of additional photos depicting pipes that had been carved but, for one reason or another, were not being entered.

Some carvers, after finishing what they thought would be their contest entries, opted instead to smoke their pipes immediately. Given the beauty, craftsmanship, and personal investment of time and care that these pipes demonstrated, that is not surprising.

Several entrants expressed the same sentiment as Frank Butler, of Cary, North Carolina: "I will not feel bad if you reject my entries for then I can smoke them!"

One carver took his finished pipe back to the tobacconist where he bought his briar block, just to show it off. While there, a customer offered to buy it, became insistent, and finally offered so much money that he couldn't turn it down. "I lost my amateur status," he writes, "but I made $200 and can buy lots more briar."

Others sent photos of their most spectacular failures: A perfect straight-grain freehand with a broken shank; a stunning brandy glass with a fissure through the side of the bowl; an exquisite horn with the smoke hole drilled a half inch too high.

It was heartbreaking to see how close some carvers had come to perfection only to discover that one minor mistake or accident or vagary of the briar could wrench that perfection away from them. Unfortunately, many people learned a hard lesson: The only difference between a perfect pipe and expensive firewood is a microsecond or a millimeter.

But even more of our readers learned

The three winners of the P&T *pipecarving contest, from left to right: Tom Johnson, 3rd place; Ronald Shimon, 2nd place; Trever Talbert, 1st place.*

Fifteen pieces were sent in for final judging. From the top, left to right: Howard Downing; Trever Talbert; Keene Bridgeman; John Zoltowski; David Kusch; Melvin Cates; Tom Johnson; Joe Privett; Walter French; Mario Escovar; Jim Larimer; Jim Larimer; Ronald Shimon; Trever Talbert. Not pictured: Lee Eargle.

the pleasant fact that carving a pipe is not quite as difficult as they imagined. The contest seems to have provided the impetus needed for getting would-be carvers out into their workshops. "Thank you for sponsoring the contest," wrote Michael Woobiec of Fredericktown, Ohio. "It gave me the incentive to not only think about making my own pipes, but to actually try my hand at it."

"Thank you for having the contest," wrote Walter French, from South Hackensack, New Jersey. "It gave me the push I needed to try making a pipe. This is my first, but thanks to you, it will not be my last." And from Benôit Laniel, of Montreal: "Thank you for the fantastic challenge. It gave me the opportunity to carve my first pipe and I'm sure it's not the last."

Some of the stories behind the pipes were as interesting as the pipes themselves. Carlton Damonte, of Albuquerque, New Mexico, for example, entered a pipe he named the Gladiator.

"I call this pipe the Gladiator," he wrote, "because my dictionary defines gladiator, in part, as 'A professional combatant who engaged in mortal combat for public entertainment.' During the carving process, I suffered three finger cuts, one very large blister on my right middle finger, a speck of something in my right eye, and a good deal of frustration. However, overall it was very entertaining. Hence the name!"

The story that Trever Talbert, our contest winner, from Thomasville, North Carolina, recounts about his winning entry is one many of our entrants can easily relate to:

"This was a seriously hard-luck pipe. During its first fine-polishing, it caught on the wheel and flew, breaking a large chunk out of the original curved ridge. I fixed this with some careful reshaping, and on that final polishing it flew again and gained another chip in the ridge. I fixed that also, but in this last fine-sanding it did the same thing and broke off the end of the point near where the stem joins the tenon! Thankfully this also was fixable. I must say I was happy to get this thing packed and shipped, while there was still a pipe left!"

The final judging of the pipes was an engrossing thing to watch. It was a truly impressive batch of pipes, and our display at the New York Pipe Show garnered plenty of interest and comment. Most people expressed disbelief that these were pipes carved by amateurs.

The judging was conducted in two different ways, and, interestingly, both methods produced the same results.

We had five professional judges: Rich Esserman and Chuck Rio, both collectors; and Clarence Mickles, J.T. Cooke and Mark Tinsky, professional pipemakers. The collectors seemed to pay more attention to the lines and shape of the pipes, while the pipemakers carefully studied the geometry and engineering, as well as the overall design.

Our second mode for judging was to

request that all attendees of the show examine and vote on the pipes. We ended up with 68 anonymous ballots. Trever Talbert's pipe was a resounding winner, with Ronald Shimon's second place and Tom Johnson's third place entries finishing more closely.

Trever Talbert and his wife, Emily, will be redeeming the first-place prize sometime in the spring. That prize is a weekend with Al and Ginny Baier in Vermont, where Trever will learn advanced pipemaking techniques in Al Baier's studio. Al Baier is a professional pipemaker, who has been carving beautiful, award-winning pipes for decades, and Trever should be able to augment his already significant skills with Al's help.

Ronald Shimon, from Cedar Rapids, Iowa, will receive three super high quality briar blocks, and Tom Johnson, of Bothell, Washington, will receive two pipe carving kits from Mark Tinsky.

We would like to congratulate all the carvers who entered our contest. It was inspiring to see the creations of so many innovative people. We hope the experience was as much a joy for those who entered as it was for us to see their creations. *P&T*

Trever Talbert sent these photos of his other creations. With work as impressive as this, imagine what Talbert will be capable of once he goes beyond the "beginner" stage!

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Part II

Mark Twain

America's most famous humorist was serious about one thing: he would never quit smoking

by Chuck Stanion

"Civilization is a limitless multiplication of unnecessary necessaries."

Samuel Clemens' early life was spent trying to find a suitable vocation and identity. He accepted that he would be a professional writer around the same time he embraced his famous pseudonym, "Mark Twain," though that did not stop him from trying new business ventures throughout his life. His basic identity, though, was more complex; it may be said that he never found that, drifting always between man and myth. One identity he was absolutely positive that he wanted, however, was that of husband and father.

On Feb. 3, 1870, the day after Samuel Clemens and Olivia Langdon were married, they set off in a private railroad car for their new life in Buffalo, New York. They were to take up residence in a boardinghouse that Clemens had yet to see.

From the railway station, their driver steered them through interminable meanderings, down unfamiliar streets, and finally brought them to a three-story brick mansion in a fashionable district of the city. "Oh," said Clemens, "this won't do. People who can afford to live in this sort of style won't take boarders."

Inside waited the wedding party, including Olivia's father, Jervis Langdon, who presented Clemens with the deed to the mansion as a wedding gift, along with a sizable check to cover the initial expense of maintaining such a fine home. It came complete with furnishings, a coachman, maid and cook, and a stable including horse and carriage.

Clemens, seldom caught without words, is reported to have been nearly overcome with surprise and gratitude. "Mr. Langdon," he said to his father-in-law, "whenever you are in Buffalo, if it's twice a year, come right up here, and bring your bag with you. You may stay overnight if you want to. *It shan't cost you a cent.*"

Clemens was fond of retelling this anecdote of his surprise wedding gift, calling it "the story of Little Sammy in Fairy Land." It was difficult for him to comprehend his good fortune. He had gone from a happy but relatively impoverished childhood to a life of impressive success. "The Innocents Abroad," his first book, was selling wonderfully, he was part owner in a thriving newspaper, he was living in a mansion and married to a beautiful heiress whom he adored.

The subject of his smoking was the only discord in their lives. Olivia and her family cited medical grounds as reason for him to quit, but he rejected their arguments, refused to yield, and even grew momentarily angry with his wife. As far as Clemens was concerned, the subject of smoking was closed. "I am sure it has caused us both more real suffering," he wrote to Olivia by way of apology, "than would accrue from smoking a million cigars."

However, the subject of smoking was a relatively minor blemish on their happiness. They were as content, he wrote, "as if we were roosting in the closing chapter of a popular novel."

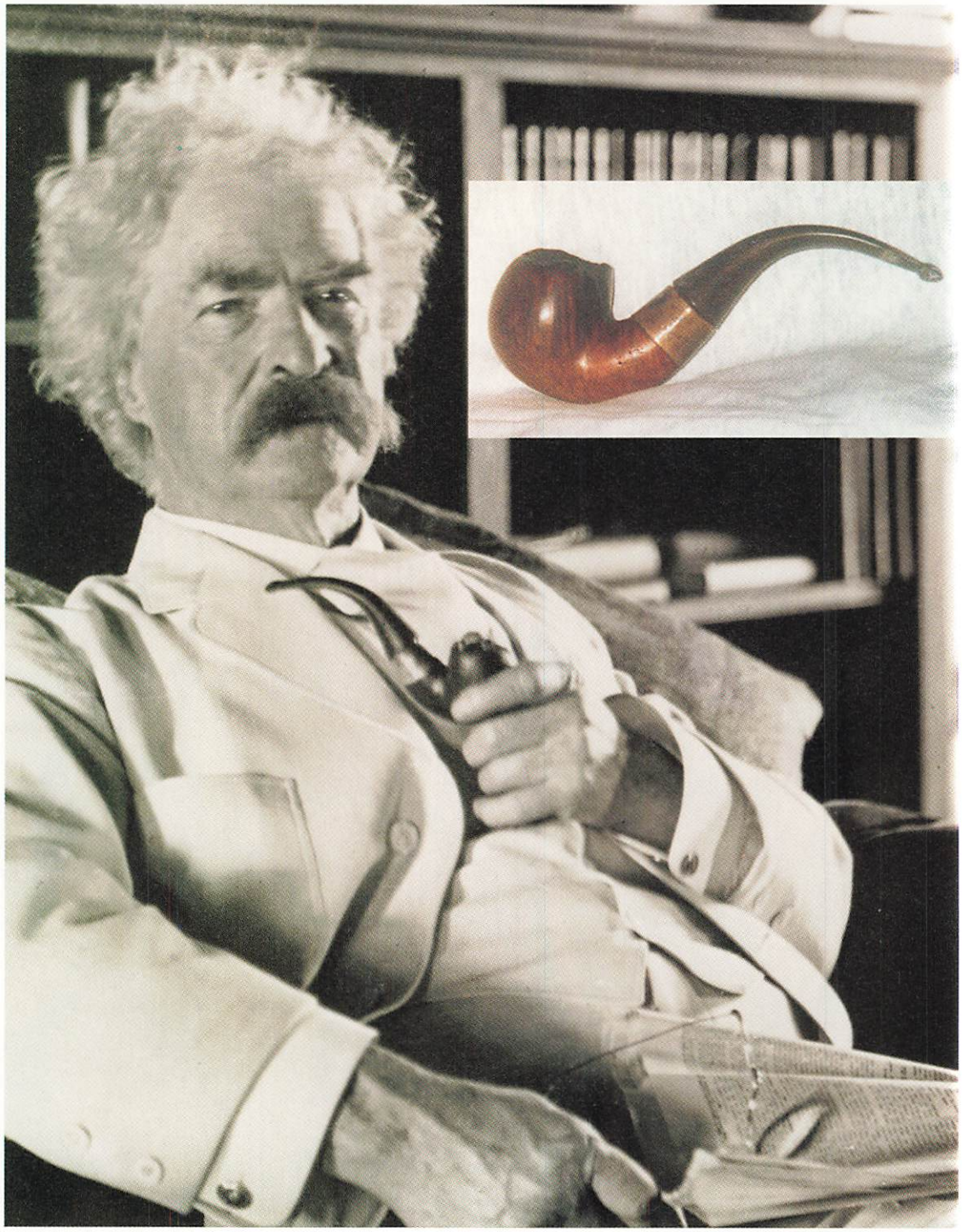
But he was wrong; they were in the chapter just before the trouble generally starts.

Clemens soon decided that newspaper writing was now too restrictive for him, too structured. In addition to his responsibilities for the *Buffalo Express*, he was working on his second book, "Roughing It," and had commitments with other publications, including a monthly 10-page humor department in the *Galaxy* magazine. Some of his finest works of satire went to the *Galaxy*, but that, too, was more of a schedule than he liked.

His responsibilities toward his own newspaper, the *Express*, were less structured, but more

Samuel Clemens in 1907, with a calabash pipe and his customary white suit. (Photo courtesy the Mark Twain House, Hartford, Connecticut.)

Clemons is shown smoking a Peterson system pipe in 1908, possibly the same one now housed in the Mark Twain Museum in Hannibal, Missouri (inset). Clemens' pipe tobacco jar is pictured below on the opposite page. (Twain photo courtesy the Mark Twain House, Hartford, Connecticut.)



"Geological time is not money."

"To create man was a quaint and original idea, but to then add sheep was tautology."

demanding. He went to the office only when he wished, did most of his writing at home, and—as a star attraction for the paper—was left to do whatever he wanted to. Still, he felt the need to write a considerable number of pieces for it, and eventually contributed 60 features and dozens of shorter items. He began to think of it as a crushing obligation.

Much of the pressure Clemens was feeling was caused by a series of tragedies at home that began shortly after his marriage. His Fairy Land was turning into an interminable sort of Hell. Jervis Langdon became ill with stomach cancer, taking long, slow months to die. Olivia, now pregnant, became ill herself as she helped nurse her father.

After Jervis Langdon's death, Olivia's mother came to live with the Clemenses in Buffalo, adding to the strain. Emma Nye, a Clemens houseguest, stayed on to help care for Olivia, but contracted typhoid fever and fell more and more ill until she died in the Clemens home.

Shortly thereafter Olivia prematurely delivered her son, Langdon Clemens—4.5 pounds at birth—and both she and the baby grew seriously ill. Clemens needed to write, but found he could not. "I am sitting still with idle hands—for Livy is very sick and I do not believe the baby will live five days."

In fact the baby lived 19 months, though he was never healthy, and never learned to walk. Olivia remained sick with complications from her pregnancy and then with typhoid throughout the entire time that Buffalo was their home.

Half insane from worry, exhaustion and grief, Clemens sold out his interest in the *Express* at a loss of $10,000. He also swore never to become a regular contributor again to any monthly magazine, and stopped writing for the *Galaxy*. His goodbye to his readers was somber, with a touch of resentment:

> *For the last eight months, with hardly any interval, I have had for my fellows and comrades, night and day, doctors and watchers of the sick! During these eight months death has taken two members of my home circle and malignantly threatened two others. All this I have experienced, yet all the time been under contract to furnish "humorous" matter once a month for this magazine. Some of the "humor" I have written during this period could have been injected into a funeral sermon without disturbing the solemnity of the occasion.*

The Clemenses had had enough. They put their house up for sale and fled Buffalo.

Their place of refuge was Elmira, New York. Quarry Farm, just a couple of miles from the Langdon family home in Elmira, was owned by Olivia's sister, Susan Crane. This was where most of Clemens' work would actually be written over the next 20 years. It would always be for the Clemens family a place of refuge from the hectic responsibilities of being in the public eye (although the public soon thought of Elmira as Mark Twain's summer home), and they spent their summers at the farm from 1870 to 1903.

Susan Crane had an octagonal study built in 1874 for Clemens; it was on a remote high hill, with an expansive view and the privacy that Clemens needed. Quarry Farm was "the home of Huck and Tom," Clemens would say, "because they were created there." The bulk of seven of Mark Twain's best-known books was written at Quarry Farm. All three Clemens daughters were born at Quarry Farm. But in 1870, Elmira was a place for Clemens to regroup and decide on the direction in which he wanted to take his career.

He decided to move his family to Hartford, one of the literary centers of the country, where they rented a house while a new mansion was built. It was a huge and ornate structure in a style that some would later call "steamboat gothic." During construction, Langdon, Clemens' first child and only son, died.

Characteristically, he blamed himself. Clemens had a curious need to ascribe responsibility whenever bad things happened. He blamed others for many things, and spent a good deal of time embroiled in lawsuits and personal rages. But much of his energy was spent finding sources for his own guilt.

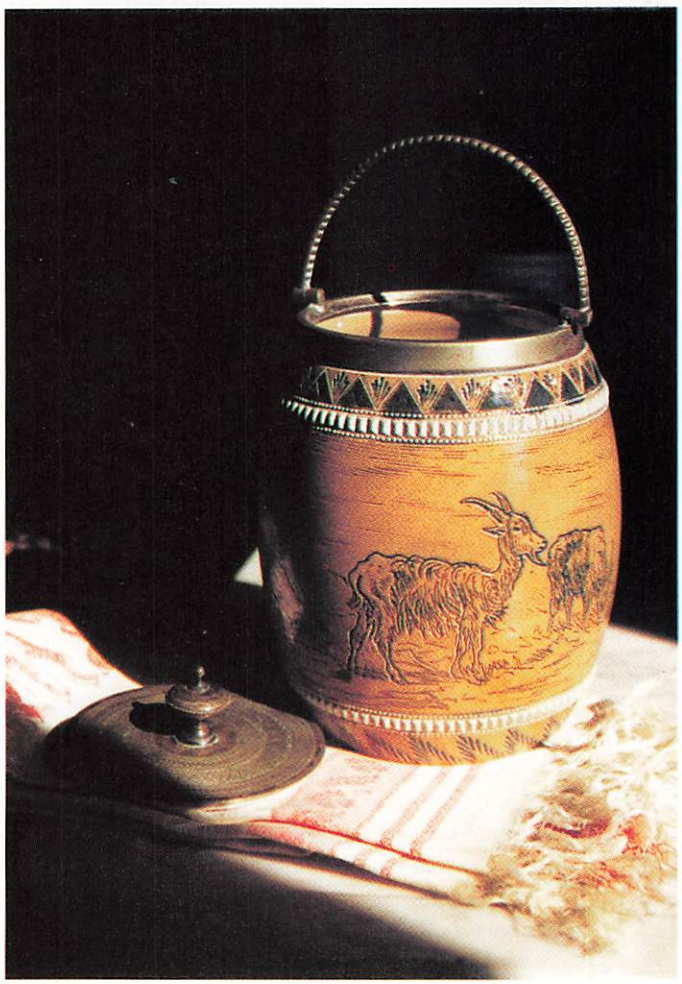
As a boy in Hannibal, he had innocently given a match to a tramp in a jail cell, who subsequently set the jail on fire and died in the blaze. Clemens' conscience never gave him ease from that memory.

As a young man, Clemens had arranged a steamboat berth for his younger brother Henry, who wanted to work on the river. The steamboat blew up, and Henry died from injuries sustained in the fire. Clemens blamed himself for the rest of his life.

When Langdon Clemens—a sickly child who was never expected to live long—died, Clemens cast about until he remembered taking the child for a drive and not noticing when his blanket slipped off. He decided that he had killed his son with that irresponsible act of negligence.

But with his son's death commenced a couple of decades of respite from tragedy. As the Clemenses moved into their new mansion in Hartford, they entered an era of happiness and productivity. The family grew by three daughters: Susy, Clara and Jean; friendships prospered. They entertained endlessly, welcoming many famous and distinguished guests into their home. ▶

"God's noblest work? Man. Who found it out? Man."



Clemens' cigar humidor is decorated with an inlay of his favorite smokes.

"Do not put off till tomorrow what can be put off till day-after-tomorrow just as well."

The home was appallingly expensive; constantly being redecorated, expanded, improved. Often, when leaving it for extended travel or for their summers in Elmira, they would feel the relief of someone who is escaping impossible demands.

Still, they loved it: "Our house was not insentient matter," Clemens would later write, "it had a heart, and a soul."

Clemens spent much of his time on the third floor, in his billiard room, which is still decorated with images of pipes and cigars. He would play endless games of billiards into the night with whomever he was entertaining. And he would smoke, of course, continually.

Even after he went to bed, Clemens did not necessarily stop smoking:

> *I smoke in bed until I have to go to sleep; I wake up in the night, sometimes once, sometimes twice, sometimes three times, and I never waste any of these opportunities to smoke.*

The year after moving into the Hartford mansion, Clemens was still displaying exasperation toward anti-smokers, as seen in "Answers to Correspondents," a sketch built upon his answers to various letters:

> *"Moral Statistician."—I don't want any of your statistics; I took your whole batch and lit my pipe with it. I hate your kind of people. You are always ciphering how much a man's health is injured, and how much his intellect is impaired, and how many pitiful dollars and cents he wastes in the course of ninety-two years' indulgence in the fatal practice of smoking....And you never try to find out how much solid comfort, relaxation, and enjoyment a man derives from smoking in the course of a lifetime (which is worth ten times the money he would save by letting it alone), nor the appalling aggregate of happiness lost in a lifetime by your kind of people from not smoking.*

The Hartford home was beautiful, commodious, pleasant to live in, but Clemens spent only about half of his time there. Aside from the summers in Elmira, he traveled extensively, with and without his family, to England, Germany, France, Switzerland. And although he made it a practice to stock up on smoking supplies before he traveled, he still experimented. Italy, he reported, actually had some smokable tobacco available, including a cigar called the Virginia:

> *It looks like a rattail file, but smokes better; some think. It has a straw through it; you pull this out, and it leaves a flue, otherwise there would be no draught, not even as much as there is to a nail. Some prefer a nail at first.*

He goes on to describe the best pipe tobacco found in Italy:

> *It is loose and dry and black, and looks like tea-grounds. When the fire is applied it expands, and climbs up and towers above the pipe, and presently tumbles off inside one's vest. The tobacco itself is cheap, but it raises insurance.*

Clemens was able to turn his travels into literature, writing prolifically during this time. His travels in Europe became his book, "A Tramp Abroad." In 1882 he returned to the Mississippi River, steamboating to New Orleans to research his book "Life on the Mississippi." His visits to England, along with his reading of Mallory's "Le Morte d'Arthur," would become "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court."

But even as his financial successes multiplied, Clemens watched his expenses multiply faster.

He wanted the freedom to write whatever he wished, without worrying about salability and popularity. Perhaps that is why he found himself investing in scheme after scheme, hoping to attain the wealth that would permit his creativity full independence.

In 1881, Clemens spent about $100,000. Improvements in the Hartford home took up over $30,000. He invested $41,000 in Kaolatype, an already-outmoded procedure for making engraved printing plates, so flawed that Twain's illustrators for "Life on the Mississippi" would refuse to allow their work to be engraved with the process. Five thousand dollars went into conventional stock investments. He brought out "The Prince and the Pauper" at his own expense, in order to reap the most personal profit.

But the real financial damage had started the year before, when Clemens met James W. Paige and invested $2,000 in the Paige Compositor. Clemens would eventually sink $200,000 into that machine, causing his own financial ruin.

The Compositor was from the start irresistible to Clemens. Having been a printer, this typesetting machine seemed miraculous to him, and he was sure it would revolutionize the printing industry and make him wealthy beyond any monetary worries. He even started a company to be ready to manufacture and distribute the Compositor. All he had to do was hang on, keep supporting Paige and his machine (at an average of $3,000 a month) until it was ready to be marketed.

Clemens' notebooks are full of references and speculations about how much money he would make, how many machines he would sell and to whom—once the Compositor was perfected. Unfortunately, it was too complex, too sensitive to ever work in a practical sense. With 18,000 parts, and designed to emulate manual procedures, it spent more time being repaired than it did working.

By 1895 Clemens was broke. His publishing firm, Charles L. Webster and Company, had failed. The failure of the company was indeed inevitable, as Clemens had drained its resources to help fund Paige. He kept believing Paige's assurances that the machine would be ready any time now, that it was almost perfect. When a working model was finally tested in 1894, Clemens' financial advisor, H.H. Rogers, was finally able to convince Clemens that the machine had no commercial merit. It was too late to save the publishing firm. Clemens had invested himself into bankruptcy.

A cheroot holder from the collection of the Mark Twain House, Hartford, Connecticut.

Europe was less of a financial strain at that time—much cheaper than trying to maintain a large house in Hartford, and Clemens moved his family abroad to economize. He fought a desperate sense of shame and impotence at his bankruptcy.

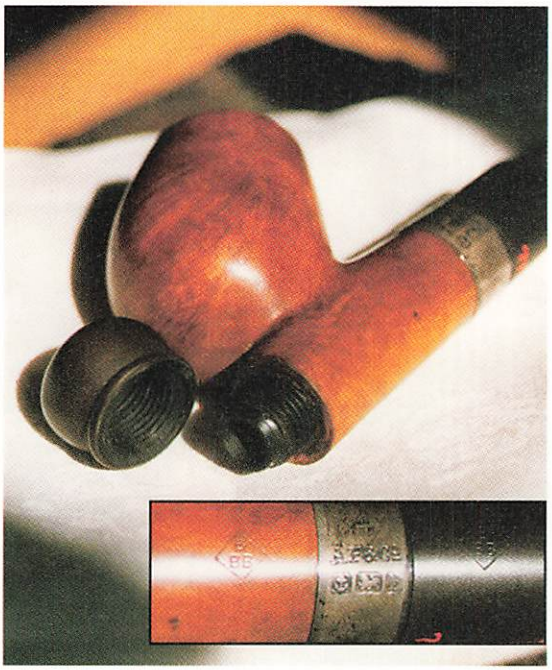
But ironically, that misfortune actually helped propel him to an even higher level in the world's regard than he had held previously.

Clemens' creditors agreed to accept a 50 percent settlement. But after listening to the advice of Olivia, that of his friend H.H. Rogers, and to his own moral codes, he decided to repay his debts in full.

To that end he embarked on a worldwide speaking tour, which he would turn into his book "Following the Equator." He hated lecturing, but it had always been a financial standby for him, and that vocation did not fail him now. People all

"If we had less statesmanship we could get along with fewer battleships."

"Nothing is made in vain, but the fly comes near it."



Clemens' BBB pipe, with silver hallmarks (see inset) and drain plug, from approximately 1908.

over the world wanted to hear Mark Twain speak. By 1898 he had cleared his debts.

With the end of his speaking tour in sight and his finances straightening out, he was making arrangements to settle his family into a home in England when the tragic news of his daughter Susy's death arrived.

Susy and Jean had stayed behind in Elmira during the lecture tour. While she was visiting the Hartford home in August of 1896 Susy became ill with spinal meningitis, dying three days later while her mother was sailing back home to nurse her. Susy was buried in Elmira next to her brother.

The Clemens family was devastated, and they stopped celebrating Christmas, unwilling to embrace any cheerful occasion without Susy.

In the year 1901 the Clemenses moved back to the United States, to New York City, but Clemens and Olivia soon moved to Florence, Italy, for Olivia's health. Strangely, doctors forbade her to see her husband except for very abbreviated periods of only a few minutes. Visits with Clemens exhausted her.

By the time Olivia died in 1904, Clemens had slowed his output of published works, writing mainly for his own amusement—and as self-prescribed therapy. He wrote volumes during his last few years, and much of that writing is still being organized and published by the Mark Twain Project in Berkeley, California.

But though he was publishing less, Clemens still enjoyed speaking engagements and banquets. He no longer accepted payment for his talks, and perhaps that is what made it enjoyable for him. He was admired by the whole world, and his opinions were sought on every subject and every item of current events. And he always had an opinion.

"When I was younger I could remember anything, whether it happened or not."

"I have achieved my 70 years in the usual way," he said in 1905. "By sticking strictly to a scheme of life which would kill anybody else." An important aspect of that rigorous lifestyle was the smoking that he never gave up. "As an example to others," he wrote, "and not that I care for moderation myself, it has always been my rule never to smoke when asleep, and never to refrain when awake."

Moderation was not a quality Clemens was known for—especially in his smoking. Smoking was not just relaxation, it was inspiration. Smoking held a mystical relevance for Clemens, and his later works reflect that.

The Connecticut Yankee, for example, sent back to the time of King Arthur by a blow to his head, fashions a pipe for himself as one of the first orders of business in that uncivilized time. Dressed in armor, on horseback, with a damsel riding behind him and a few peasants standing nearby, he lights it:

> *When the first blast of smoke shot out through the bars of my helmet, all those people broke for the woods, and Sandy went over backwards and struck the ground with a dull thud. They thought I was one of those fire-belching dragons they had heard so much about from knights and other professional liars.*

Smoking, in the fiction of Mark Twain, is a subject of fear, admiration, even veneration. Smoking can even be used as a weapon against the ignorant, as the Yankee proves when he comes upon a half dozen armed knights who attack him:

> *I lit up at once, and by the time I had got a good head of reserved steam on, here they came. All together, too; none of those chivalrous magnanimities which one reads so much about—one courtly rascal at a time, and the rest standing by to see fair play. No, they came in a body....It was a handsome sight, a beautiful sight—for a man up a tree. I laid my lance in rest and waited, with my heart beating, till the iron wave was just ready to break over me, then spouted a column of white smoke through the bars of my helmet. You should have seen the wave go to pieces and scatter!*

In a shorter piece, "The Facts Concerning the Recent Carnival of Crime in Connecticut," smoking is again used as a weapon, this time against a greater enemy: the human conscience.

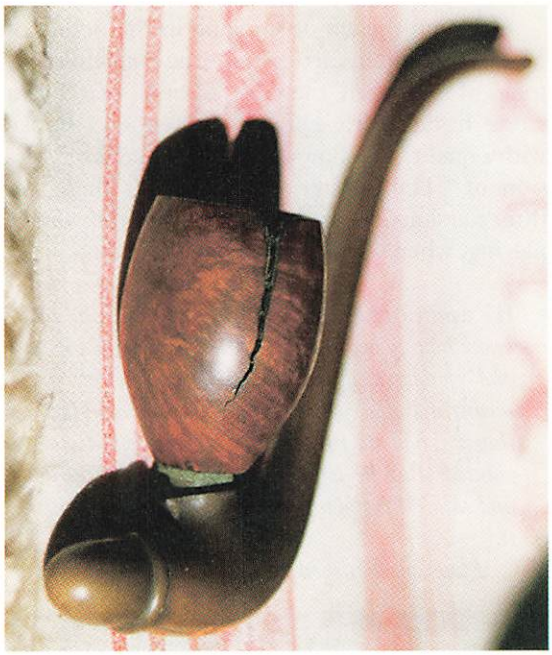
In a bizarre twist, the narrator's conscience becomes a visible being, and better able to cause anguish. The conscience is a repulsive dwarf with oafish manners. "And yet," says the narrator, "this vile bit of human rubbish seemed to bear a sort of remote and ill-defined resemblance to me!"

He tossed his hat into the waste basket. He picked up my old chalk pipe from the floor, gave the stem a wipe or two on his knee, filled the bowl from the tobacco-box at his side, and said to me in a tone of pert command—"Gimme a match!"

In the course of conversation, as the conscience gleefully describes his philosophy and the reasons for his appearance, a weakness becomes apparent. Where he has tortured the narrator perhaps a little too strenuously, rebellion has ensued:

"Of course I began to lose ground, then, and shrivel a little, diminish in stature, get mouldy, and grow deformed. The more I weakened, the more stubbornly you fastened on those particular sins; till at last the places on my person that represent those vices became as callous as shark skin. Take smoking, for instance. I played that card a little too long, and I lost. When people plead with you at this late day to quit that vice, that old callous place seems to enlarge and cover me all over like a shirt of mail. It exerts a mysterious, smothering effect; and presently I, your faithful hater, your devoted Conscience, go sound asleep!"

When the narrator's aunt arrives a few minutes later and starts upbraiding the narrator to quit smoking, his conscience grows sluggish. The lecture continues until, "With a long-drawn sigh my conquered Conscience closed his eyes and fell fast asleep!"



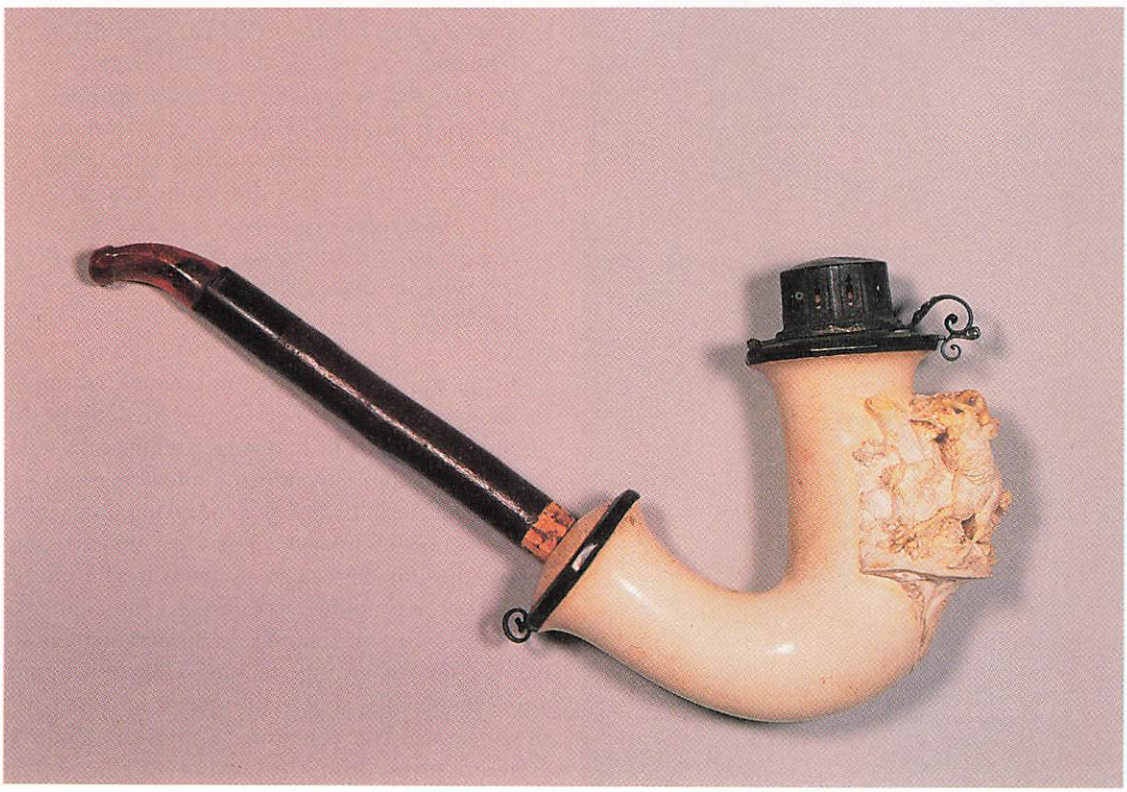
Another piece from the Hartford collection, this pipe has no markings to indicate the make. One of Clemens' meerschaums, depicting a hunting scene, is shown below. (Photo by Robert Benson.)

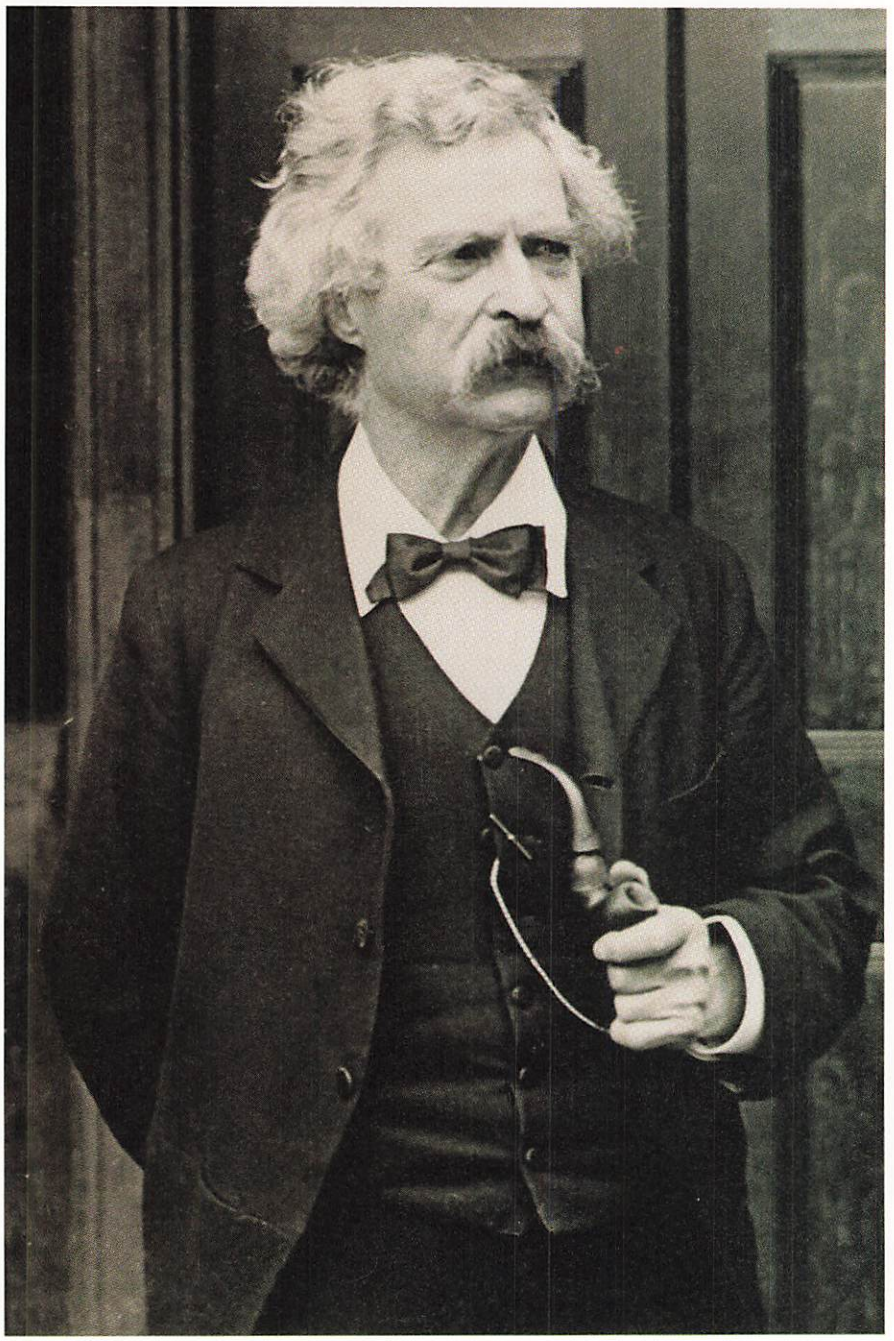
With an exultant shout I sprang past my aunt, and in an instant I had my life-long foe by the throat. After so many years of waiting and longing, he was mine at last. I tore him to shreds and bits. I rent the fragments to bits....At last, and forever, my Conscience was dead!

It is a delightful bit of fantasy, an admirable work of imagination. Given Clemens' over-active conscience in real life, and the weary antagonism he displayed when people argued that he should quit smoking, this humorous tale takes on a remarkable relevance. ▶

"Some of us cannot be optimists, but all of us can be bigamists."

"The lack of money is the root of all evil."





Clemens as photographed in 1900. (Photo courtesy the Mark Twain House, Hartford, Connecticut.)

Although the act of smoking in the fiction of Mark Twain often carries humorous/violent overtones of mysticism, the very last book that Twain wrote has an early episode that endows smoke with a quality of fellowship. In the "Eseldorf" version of "The Mysterious Stranger" (there are three versions), three boys are out in the woods, playing, when a strange boy happens along.

> *We wanted to be friendly with him, but didn't know how to begin. Then I thought of the pipe, and wondered if it would be taken as kindly meant if I offered it to him. But I remembered that we had no fire, so I was sorry and disappointed. But he looked up bright and pleased, and said: "Fire? Oh, that is easy; I will furnish it."*
>
> *I was so astonished I couldn't speak; for I had not said anything. He took up the pipe and blew his breath on it, and the tobacco glowed red, and spirals of blue smoke rose up.*

The boys, like previous Twain characters, are about to run from a mystical being with a pipe. The stranger turns out to be an angel named Satan, after his uncle of greater fame. From this strange beginning, with smoke, progresses a strange friendship.

In the days before his death Clemens slowed his tobacco intake to four cigars a day. The death of his daughter Jean on Christmas Eve, 1909, weakened him, and the angina pectoris that he labeled "tobacco heart" was giving him more and more trouble.

Of his immediate family, only his daughter Clara was left, and Clemens began thinking, without much regret, that he would soon die. He was born in 1835 as Halley's Comet passed by the earth, and in March of 1910 it was again visible. In a letter to Clara he imagined that God must be saying, "Here are these two unaccountable freaks"—Halley's Comet and Mark Twain—"They came in together, they must go out together....Oh! I am looking forward to that." The comet reached perihelion on April 20, and at sunset on April 21, 1910, Clemens died.

He may have lived a little longer than his 74 years if he had not smoked. But he would not have traded his pipes and cigars for that bit of time; he felt sorry for those who never found the solace in smoking that he had found:

> *It seems a pity that the world would throw away so many good things merely because they are unwholesome. I doubt if God has given us any refreshment which, taken in moderation, is unwholesome, except microbes. Yet there are people who strictly deprive themselves of each and every eatable, drinkable, and smokable which has in any way acquired a shady reputation. They pay this price for health. And health is all they get for it. How strange it is! It is like paying out your whole fortune for a cow that has gone dry.*

From the simple Huck Finn, enjoying a pipe in the bottom of a canoe on the Mississippi, to young Satan, an all-knowing, omnipotent and immortal being beyond the understanding of humanity, Mark Twain's pipe-smoking characters evoke powerful images of smoke, images that reflect the importance of smoking in the life of their creator. Smoking was a bridge, for Clemens, from reality to imagination. In his personal life as well as in his writing, Samuel Clemens found amusement, satisfaction and magic in the swirls of smoke that climbed into the air, into literature and into history from the bowl of his pipe. ***P&T***

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. . . just call me Mac

Whether talking about his love of latakia or the chasm between TV programmers and viewers, unpretentious actor Gerald McRaney just tells it like it is

by Larry O'Connor

"You can get a lot of serious thinking done smoking a pipe—it might all be B.S., but it will be some very serious B.S."

It's the ritual as much as anything that draws Gerald McRaney to pipe smoking. "You know, tapping out the bowl, cleaning out the pipe, packing the bowl, lighting it and tamping it again—I guess because of all the associations with the pastime, it means 'OK, you can relax now.'"

And what of the stereotyped deep introspection associated with pipes? "Oh yeah, that too," quips the 50-year-old Mississippi-born actor. "You can get a lot of serious thinking done smoking a pipe—it might all be B.S., but it will be some very serious B.S."

McRaney, who in September began his second season as the star of CBS's "Promised Land," is one of television's most recognizable—and most popular—actors. A fixture in prime time television for the past 13 years, McRaney earlier played title roles in "Major Dad" and "Simon & Simon."

He has also starred in countless mini-series, including "Nothing Lasts Forever" with Brooke Shields and Vanessa Williams, and numerous TV movies including "Not My Son," "Deadly Vows," "A Stranger Beside Me" and the upcoming "1,000 Men and a Baby" (scheduled to air this December as part of CBS's special Christmas programming). The gifted actor has also guest-starred on a number of other television series including "Coach," "Touched by an Angel" (from which "Promised Land" is a spinoff) and "Women of the House."

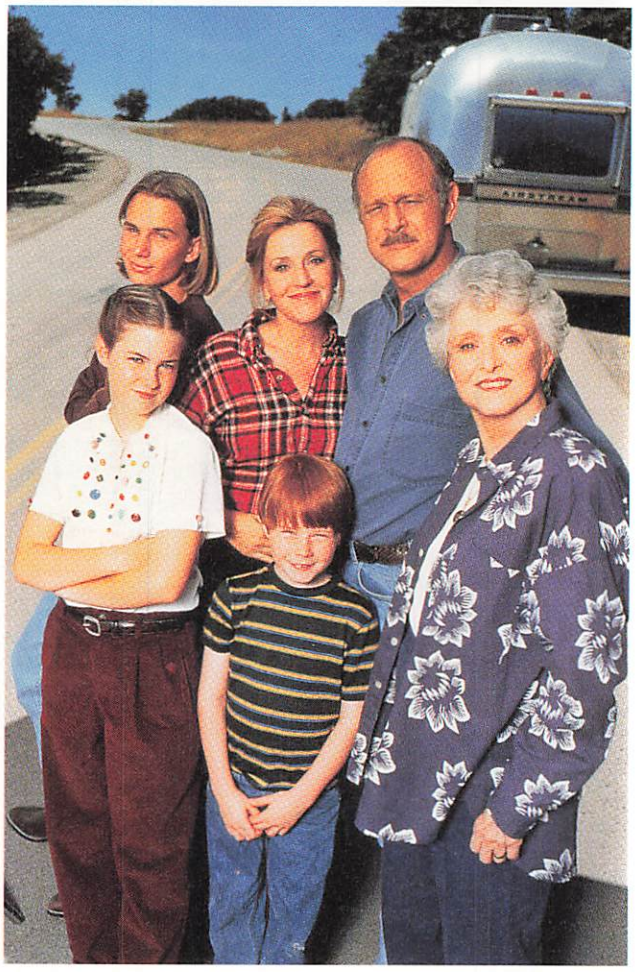
Speaking to *P&T* from Raleigh Studio in Hollywood during a break in the filming of a promotional spot for "Promised Land," McRaney proved to be as down-to-earth and engaging in a one-on-one interview as he is on screen. "Just call me Mac," the easy-going actor corrects his interviewer. "I'm not Mister McRaney—at least not while I'm still alive."

In "Promised Land," McRaney portrays Russell Greene, the head of the peripatetic Greene family, which roams the highways and towns of America in a travel trailer in search of Russell's missing brother. Along the way, the Greenes encounter a series of touching and sometimes mystical adventures, and McRaney once again demonstrates his uncanny ability to connect with television's "average" viewer.

His appeal is particularly strong in the Deep South and the Midwest—so-called Middle America—where many viewers see themselves as disenfranchised by Hollywood programmers. "And I agree with them," says McRaney.

But while Hollywood is often lambasted as too liberal and permissive for average viewers by conservative critics, McRaney says the fault line between television programmers and viewers has little to do with political viewpoints. "I don't think people out there in Middle America care whether something is conservative or liberal, just whether it is right or not.

"It's not so much a difference in core values



McRaney has starred on a number of hit TV series, starting with "Simon & Simon." "Major Dad," shown on the preceding page and above, benefited from exceptionally good chemistry between McRaney and co-star Shanna Reed. The new series, "Promised Land," features the adventures of a family pulling a trailer across America in a search for a lost brother. McRaney has always had a preference for Savinelli pipes, which he is shown lighting, and latakia tobacco blends.

as it is a difference in their way of life. If you get out into the Midwest or the Deep South where I grew up, on Friday nights people are out at the high school ballgame. That is not an urban concept at all. And a lot of the social life in the middle part of America is drawn from people's churches, whatever their churches are. And so people in the middle part of America often look at television and say 'What are all these people doing and what does that have to do with my life?'"

Over the years, McRaney's regular-guy good looks, sincerity and warmth have endeared him to millions of fans in that middle America—and on both coasts, as well. But McRaney has also played the villain, usually as convincingly as he plays the hero. He has tried to avoid being typecast, choosing a wide variety of roles—from farmer to hit man, from Vietnam vet to vigilante and corrupt Southern sheriff. "I like to mix it up and play roles that go totally against type," he says.

McRaney was bitten by the drama bug in junior high school after a knee injury forced him to give up football. He starred in his high school's productions and later spent a year (1965) studying drama at the University of Mississippi. But the road to the top was not an easy one, and it wasn't until 1973 that McRaney began showing up on a variety of TV series.

Among his many other credits, McRaney appeared four times on the long-running "Gunsmoke." Like millions of other kids, McRaney had grown up watching James Arness shooting it out with a seemingly endless stream of bad guys. But McRaney had the honor of being the very last gunslinger ever to slap leather against the famed Matt Dillon. "When I walked out there on Dodge Street with a six-gun strapped on, I might as well have been 10 years old again," laughs McRaney.

McRaney first took up a pipe while at the University of Mississippi, although he doesn't recall the circumstances. But it was a natural enough event for the son and grandson of pipe smokers. "My grandfather smoked all the time. He was a farmer in Mississippi, and there were always pipes and a can of Prince Albert sitting around."

The actor's own taste runs to latakia. "I like to have my tobacco custom mixed. And I like latakia a lot. I know it irritates a lot of people, but I just love the smell of it and the taste of it and everything else about it. I've experimented with aromatics and I just hate them. To me they bite and produce a false aroma. I like good, heavy, robust tobacco," he says.

His pipe collection consists primarily of Savinellis, most of them collected during his days

playing pipe-smoking private detective Rick Simon. "They're mostly one form or another of a bent pipe—that's what I prefer. I just find them cooler smoking. And most of them are medium-sized and moderate weight. I don't like small pipes. On the other hand, I don't want something that's going to pull my teeth out, either."

McRaney also likes to smoke cigars, H. Upmann being his favorite brand. "One of the great things about a cigar is that you just clip the end of it and fire it up. You can smoke and work at the same time—well, if you're around civilized people, that is. On the other hand, for me, a pipe is the smoke for the end of the day—when you have time for the ritual," he says.

One of the first gifts actress Delta Burke, McRaney's wife of eight years, gave him was a hand-tooled cigar case she picked up on a visit to Mexico, while the couple was still dating. "So I figured this is a good woman," he says.

The second gift she gave McRaney, an avid hunter and fisherman, was an antique shotgun. "And right after that I married her," he jokes.

McRaney usually doesn't smoke on the set, so as not to offend others, he says. "I want to be as polite as I can. But we have a couple of pipe smokers working on the set I'm on now, so they don't object. They're old grips—lighting technicians and electricians—you know, people who work for a living as opposed to people who go to Washington and try to outlaw tobacco."

Despite the numerous problems Americans sometimes have getting along, McRaney says he's still high on the country. "Let's face it, this is the best country going."

But McRaney, who lives in the French Quarter in New Orleans and also owns a farm in Mississippi, says he's not a flag-waving super-patriot, as he is sometimes made out to be. And the story lines of his series have sometimes dealt with serious social concerns including drug abuse, age discrimination and alcoholism. "I don't believe in 'My country, right or wrong!' I believe in 'My country, right or fix it!'"

And that is part of what his latest series' title connotes, he says. "The concept of a 'promised land'—even if you take it back to the Book of Exodus—is not about absolute deliverance. It's about a chance at deliverance."

The message of "Promised Land" is not to try to escape the problems of the country by running away from them, but rather to face them head on, McRaney says. "The answer isn't to move to a small city, where everything will be just fine. That just isn't true. The answer is to pitch in—wherever you are. If you don't like the way things are going, get off your duff and do something about it." *P&T*

"I don't believe in 'my country, right or wrong!' I believe in 'my country, right or fix it!'"

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Savinelli

This family's dedication to pipemaking over four generations has made the Savinelli name synonomous with fine Italian pipes

by Dayton H. Matlick

On clear days the Swiss Alps can be seen in the distance from the factory, their white, snow-clad peaks gleaming against the blue sky. The drive from Varese, the largest city in the area, to the Savinelli factory isn't long. One small town blends into another—Masnago, Luvinate, plus many smaller villages in between. To the left, down the hill, there are occasional glimpses of beautiful Lake Varese, itself surrounded by villages.

The sign for the town of Barasso is a clue to locating the turnoff. Down the hill and around several curves a street sign reads "A. Savinelli." The factory is a left turn from here, down the hill a bit and through a staff-operated gate. Opened in 1950, the factory is spacious and clean, inside and out.

No sooner has the large metal gate closed off the outside world again than a couple of beeps sound and the gate immediately slides aside to allow a large BMW motorcycle to enter. The helmet comes off to reveal Giancarlo Savinelli. Medium height, dark hair, dark eyes and an almost boyish smile emerge as he explains that he can make much better time on the motorcycle on the expressways between Milan and Barasso, on which motorcycles typically zoom past already fast-moving autos.

The first step inside the factory is an introduction to Marco Fumei da Cortà, production director of the Savinelli pipe factory in northwest Italy. Marco recently celebrated his 34th year of working for Savinelli, lured into it by Achille Savinelli himself and still here because of that shared vision for which Achille was so famous.

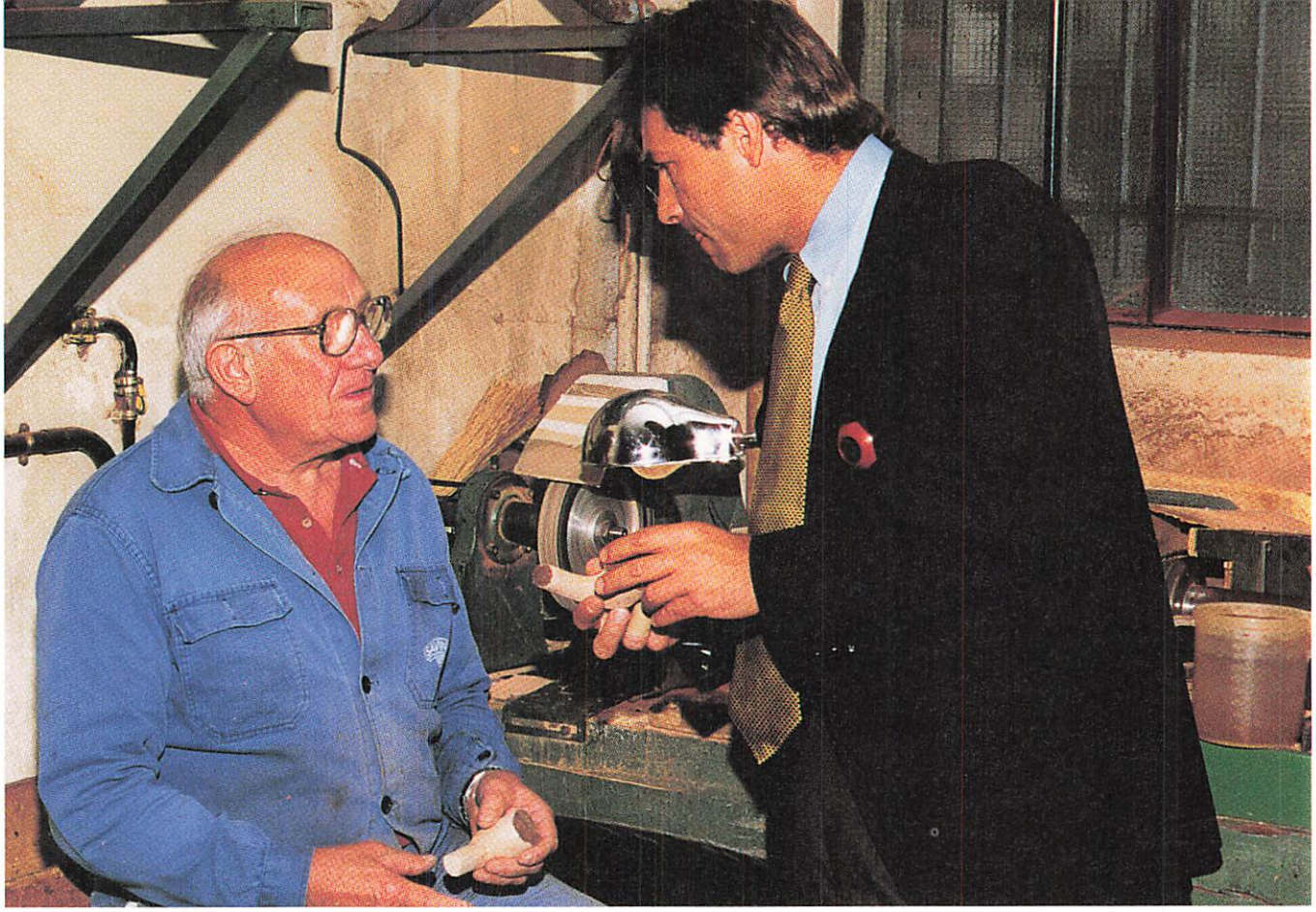
"Savinelli pipes are No. 2 in the world," says Marco. "We are No. 2 in product, quality, shapes, color, finishes—all the things that make pipes special. The only question left," he says with a smile, "is who is No. 1."

This world-famous pipe company began simply, four generations ago. Each generation of the Savinelli family produced individuals who, in their own way, have helped the company grow to its current stature.

In 1876—121 years ago—Achille Savinelli had a dream...a dream of selling pipes and smoking accessories in an almost impossible environment. Impossible because Italy had—and still has—a tobacco monopoly. Tobacco could be sold only with a permit from the government, which he didn't have. His dream of selling pipes was further dampened by a lack of funds with which to stock his display windows.

To make the challenge even greater, Achille was absolutely convinced of a future for the relatively new briar pipes at a time when more than 90 percent of the market was held by meerschaum and clay pipes. Three big risks upon which to build a future! ▶

Tens of thousands of blocks of briar are stored at the factory before becoming Savinelli pipes.



Milan, Italy—containing the great Gothic cathedral Duomo—slowly grew. New accessories were added which, in turn, contributed to the store's success. Eventually his passion led him to design pipes, which were made for him by local artisans.

Today, Savinelli is one of the most famous brands of pipes in the world. And the company is run by, and ownership is still in the hands of, direct descendants of that first Achille Savinelli.

After those early years, the northern Italy company did so well that it expanded. A brother and sister moved to Genoa, south of Milan on the coast, where they opened shops that added to the fame of the family name. Later, a second shop was opened in Milan.

The name of Achille Savinelli came back every other generation among the leaders of this family dynasty. After the original Achille came son Carlo, who wasn't much interested in designing pipes, but had a real talent for dealing with people. It was the son of Carlo, the second Achille Savinelli in the company, who spread the word of quality Savinelli pipes around the world. This Achille was a marketing genius that many older tobacconists still remember today.

From the beginning, the second Achille was captivated by pipes. While his mother and father were talking to customers, he preferred to stay back in the workshop, working with his hands, designing and creating. In fact, he was so focused on pipes that he neglected school and homework. He developed the first genuine Savinelli pipe just before World

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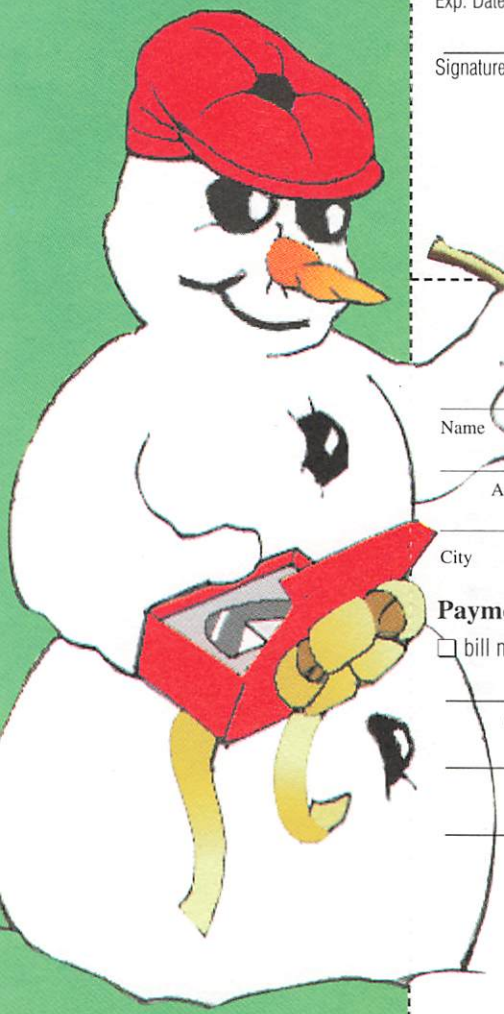

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War II erupted. But even the war, in a roundabout way, contributed to his eventual success.

This Achille had his own dream. Italy produced some of the best briar in the world, but the pipes produced there were cheap—sold by the dozen. English pipes had a reputation for quality, why not Italian pipes? The dream led him to start a pipemaking factory in 1948 with distant relative Enea Buzzi, near Brebbia. All pipes produced there were sold and marketed through the Savinelli company and its shops. But after a year or so, these two strong, opinionated men parted ways.

In 1950, Achille created a factory in Barasso, within sight of the now defunct Rossi Company pipe factory that was then the epitome of cheap Italian pipes, said to ship a boxcar load of pipes each day during its heyday.

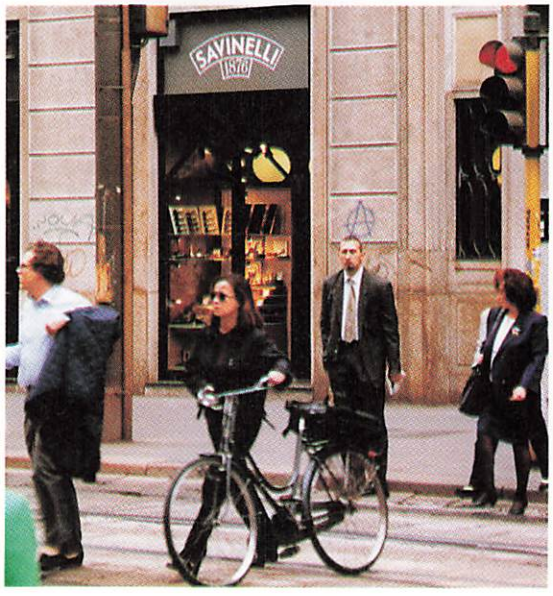
This second Achille had a *big* personality. He was charismatic, outgoing, friendly to outsiders, demanding of those close to him. If you were near him long, you became a participant in his dream of world-quality pipes.

Almost from the beginning, pipes from this new factory began to make the world take notice. Some of this was because of Achille's genius and vision; the rest was due to two important men who gave themselves to that vision.

One was Amleto Pome, an inseparable friend during their military service who became his export manager, a key role in the vision of making Savinelli pipes known around the world. (Today, Amleto's son, Roberto, holds the same position in the company.)

The second was the creative genius Mario Vettoruzzo.

While Achille was the charismatic leader and Amleto was the consummate sales manager, Mario was the technical brains. Among Mario's creations is the sought-after Corallo rusticated pipe, no longer made. The secret of making the attractive carvings on these pipes was taught to only a few trusted employees—and the pipes were made only behind locked doors. It is a tribute to the strength of personality of Mario that the secret was kept. He was also instrumental in



Giancarlo Savinelli discusses a shape with one of the Savinelli staff (top, facing page). The freedom from traditional shapes is exemplified in the Savinelli Autograph (above).

the development of the Savinelli balsa filter, an unbreakable tenon and Savinelli's own set of pipe colors.

Mario retired earlier this year at the age of 82, having worked part time in his later years. He continues to live in his spacious villa on the factory grounds. (As is true with Amleto's son, Mario's son works for the company, but in the factory.)

Savinelli headquarters is located in Milan on No. 3 Dogana Street, less than a block from the original Savinelli shop, which is still located at No. 2 Orefici. Fifteen people work at the headquarters, directing and coordinating a worldwide marketing operation.

When Achille Savinelli died in 1987, the operation of the family business was taken over by daughter Marisetta, who was in the process of establishing a reputation as a fashion designer. She still continues in a position similar to an American chairman of the board and focuses her talent on the development of the many accessory items marketed by Savinelli. (Her son, Luca Fumei da Cortà, works at Savinelli headquarters.)

Day-to-day operations are now managed by Marisetta's younger brother, Giancarlo Savinelli.

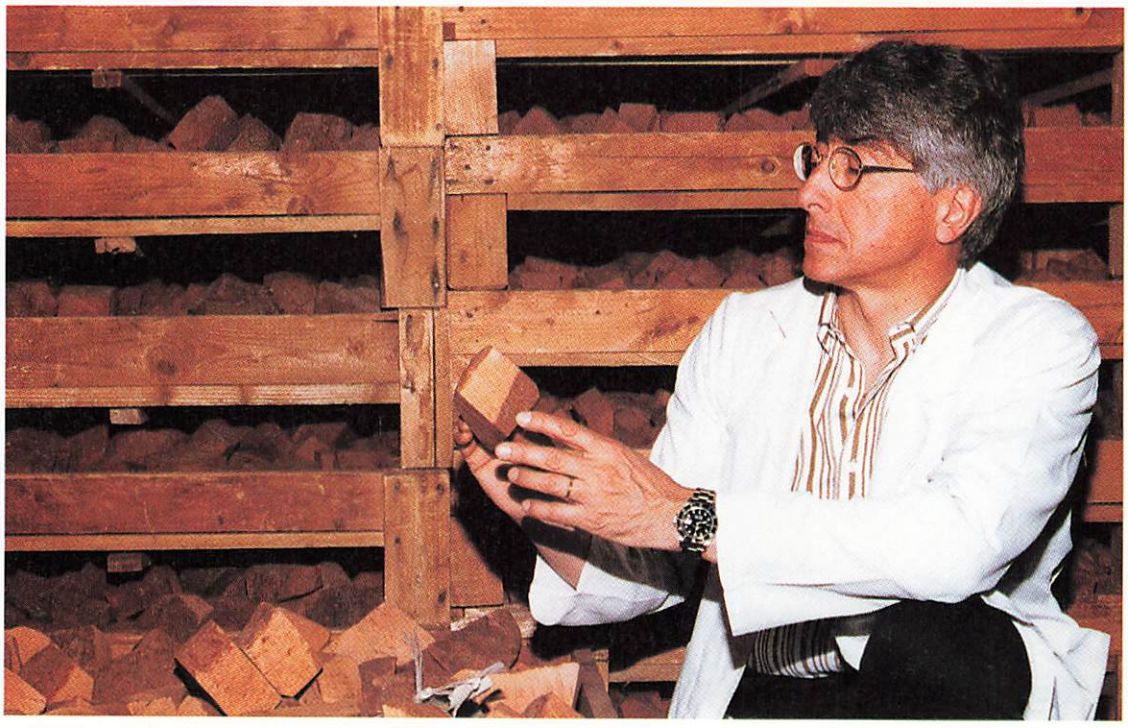
Giancarlo was a 20-year-old student in political science when his father died. However, while attending college he had worked in the factory part time, and it was there that he learned to share his father's love for the design and creation of briar pipes.

The first concrete evidence of his design talent was the development of the concept for the Mr. G (for Giancarlo) pipe. It involves the first use of brass rings with a center briar ring for contrast. Although it was first resisted by his father, who grew up with unadorned designs, it was later offered commercially to a sound reception in the marketplace.

Currently, all but one of the pipe shapes and designs offered by Savinelli are creations of Giancarlo and his father, Achille.

The exception was a unique alligator pipe created by Marisetta's design sense. The story goes that she brought a pair of her shoes to the pipemakers and asked them to create a surface on the briar similar to the pebbled texture of the shoes. The successful design is still sold by Savinelli.

Although the company's headquarters and two of its shops are located in Milan, the Savinelli fac-



Amedeo Bogni, head of the shaping division, works on a pipe (facing page). Marco Fumei da Corta, the production director, examines a block to determine its grade (below). A Giubileo D'Oro is pictured on opposite page. The smooth autograph above is among the most famous pipes in the world, featured in all Savinelli catalogs. Millions of lire have been offered for this pipe. It is not for sale.

A selection of Savinelli Alligators (above) features cumberland mouthpieces. The Long John (below) is so named for obvious reasons. The size scale of the set of miniature Savinelli pipes (opposite) may be determined by comparing them with the standard sized pipe at the upper left corner.

tory itself is located north and west, more than an hour's drive away. It is here that the tens of thousands of Savinelli pipes are produced every year.

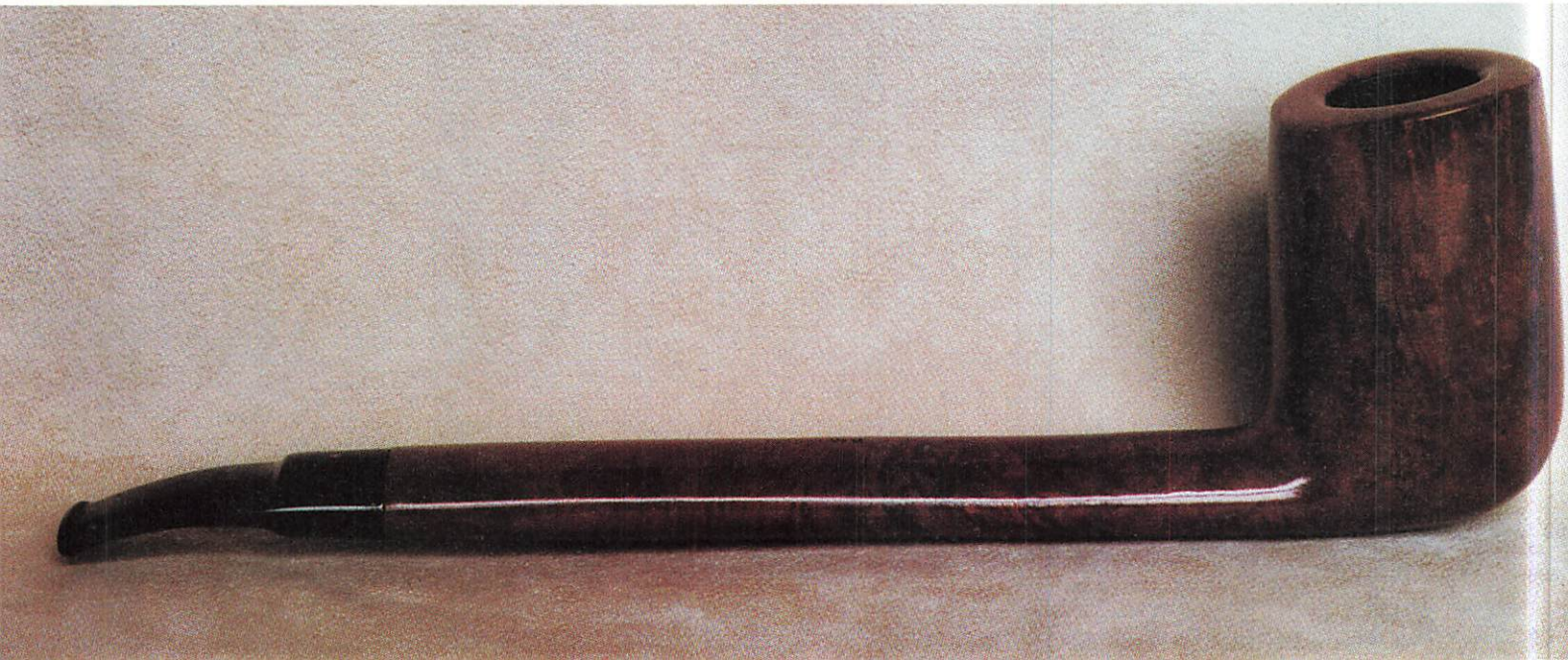
Those of a high enough quality are sold under the Savinelli trademark. Some of the others may have another trademark, followed by "a Savinelli product." Others may not mention Savinelli at all.

As with all good pipemakers, an adequate supply of high-quality briar is of extreme importance to Savinelli.

"Briar is our life," says Marco. "Having a good selection of well-cured briar means we can go into the market with a new product in a short period of time. It allows us great flexibility."

The briar is stored for at least two years before use. The ideal moisture for making pipes from briar is 12 to 15 percent, according to Marco. Scientific tests to determine the moisture level of the wood don't work—they're too slow and too expensive. "The best way is to cut the wood," says Marco. "If it is uniformly light colored, it is ready. If it is pink or a darker semicircle is visible, it's too damp."

Achille Savinelli told Marco long ago, "If you want to buy in a good way, pay. You will buy better." Most is bought in Italy, in Toscana, Calabria, Sicily and Sardenia, plus some from Corsica



and its surrounding regions just across the French/Italian border.

As Giancarlo leads the way through the factory, he points out that there is a misunderstanding in many people's minds about factory-made pipes. Although Savinelli may use some machines to remove unwanted wood at the earliest stages, so do most artisans working out of their homes. However, more than 80 percent of each pipe is produced by hand, he points out, involving many steps. For this reason each pipe is subtly different from every other pipe, he says, and not the result of assembly line production, which most people think of when they hear the word "factory." "This makes our people and their skills our greatest resource."

The impression throughout the factory is one of competent people busily absorbed in their work. At one side of the building, somewhat set aside from the rest of the work space, Amedeo Bogni does the first rough shaping of the pipes. He also does special work on Autograph pipes, Savinelli's most famous line.

Amedeo has been making pipes for more than 50 years, the last 12 with Savinelli. He is assisted by Dario Beghetto, in training under Amedeo for five years, and Davide Parrino, relatively new on the job with two years of experience. The first step is for Amedeo—or sometimes Dario—to mark the shape on the briar block. Then saws whine in short bursts as the basic shapes are roughed out by Dario and Davide.

The rough bowls go to ranks of craftsmen who do the shaping by hand on sandpaper wheels. This critical work is guided by two men with the highest credentials. The head of this section is Ignazio Guarino, with 30 years of experience. The other is Franco Toscan, with 36 years of experience. Almost all finishing on the important Autograph pipes is done personally by these two men.

Two other essential, long-term employees are Ildo Caberletti and Lino Seceo. Ildo draws on his 35 years of experience as he drills air holes and puts together the mouthpieces and accessories—rings, silver, etc. Lino, on the other hand, is a great tool man. He both makes and improves the machines throughout the factory. He also helps out with all tasks requiring attention to small details.

Giancarlo points out that Savinelli for years has used natural products to color and seal its pipes. "We don't use varnish," he says, "but a natural product that has been used on the best Italian furniture since the 1600s. It seals our unique colors and maintains the ability of the wood to breath. Carnauba wax is applied over this for a lasting shine."

Finished pipes are shipped several times a week to the Milan headquarters for inspection, grading, stamping and shipping.

"Grading is one of the first things my father taught me," says Giancarlo. "We would lay all of our Autograph pipes—our best pipes—out on a table. Then it was my task to grade them. We grade Autographs the same today—starting from

"Briar is our life."

the bottom, four through eight, plus zero, double zero and triple, with triple zero the best of the best. We don't get many triple zeros. It was difficult for me at first because I kept letting my personal preferences for shapes get in the way. My father made me do it over and over again. Then I learned to judge each shape on its own and grade within that shape for grain, finish and other factors."

Distribution—a challenge for many companies, in and out of the pipe business—was settled for the United States when Achille Savinelli decided his current distributor wasn't working out. In 1972 he invited E. Ruben Ysidron to run a new company to distribute Savinelli products in the U.S. The arrangement has succeeded to the benefit of all concerned for 25 years. The new distribution company was first located in Decatur, Indiana, and later moved to Morrisville, North Carolina.

"I wasn't sure I would go into the family business," says Giancarlo. "But after I learned enough

"... when I get to create a new pipe, it is a beautiful feeling."

to work well with my hands, I realized I love the world of the pipe very much. I like it all, but especially the creative part. I love to create new shapes—new models, new ideas. With a large operation to run, most of the time is spent in administration. I do this because it must be done. But when I get to create a new pipe, it is a beautiful feeling."

Savinelli has come a long way from the shop with the paper pipes in the window 121 years ago. Briar pipes now constitute 95 percent of the world pipe market, and Savinelli transforms Italian briar into some of the most respected names in the pipe world, producing thousands of high-quality pipes each year.

There is no sign of slowing down in this family dynasty. As a further sign of continuity, Giancarlo became the father of a son in 1989.

The name of the son? Achille Savinelli, of course. ***P&T***

Blocks are examined individually to determine what shapes they are suitable for. The pipes at bottom left are part of the Mr. G line, while the natural colored Coralo pipes (above) are extremely rare and sought-after collector pieces.

Savinelli nomenclature

AUTOGRAPH—Hand-designed, one-of-a-kind pipes. Allows the use of the Balsa System. Finishes: Smooth, sandblast, panels (combination of smooth and sandblast). Shapes: Shape chart doesn't apply. Colors: Sandblast Autographs come in black or brown. Most Autographs, other than sandblast, are natural color. MSRP (manufacturer's suggested retail price): $180 to $1,100.

GIUBILEO D'ORO—Availability is limited. Shapes: 40. Finishes: Sandblast or smooth. Colors: Sandblasts are available in black or brown; smooth in walnut or natural. MSRP: $320 to $400.

COLLECTION—Each year Savinelli creates a special, limited pipe-of-the-year for collectors. MSRP: $200. A collector's pipe rack is also available.

GIUBILEO TWIN BIT—Same as the Giubileo D'Oro except it comes with an 18-karat gold band and an extra, fitted mouthpiece. Available only in Europe.

PUNTO ORO—Standard shapes in a variety of forms. Finishes: Smooth and sandblast. Shapes: 30. Colors: Sandblast in reddish brown or dark brown. Variations include: Punto Oro Vera Oro, with a gold band; Punto Oro Blasone, with a silver blason for engraving initials; Punto Oro Sabiata (sandblasted), available with a silver mounting or a gold band. MSRP: $95 to $200.

MR. G—A sandblast pipe with a smooth top and double brass bands on the side of an accent-colored briar band. The first pipe designed by Giancarlo Savinelli. Balsa System. Shapes: 24. MSRP $96.

MEDITERRANEA—The graining on this series is highlighted by a special coloring process and has a Cumberland mouthpiece. Two brass bands accent the mouthpiece. Balsa System. Finishes: Smooth and rustic, but only smooth is available in the U.S. MSRP: $140.

CHAMPAGNE—Natural briar with one or two brass bands. Balsa System. Finish: Smooth. Shapes: 40. Colors: Natural, walnut. MSRP $75.

CLUB—Available with either an army mount with a wide silver band or a Cumberland mouthpiece. Balsa System. Finishes: Smooth and sandblast. Available only in Europe.

TRIS—Available with a Cumberland mouthpiece, with a triple band of selected materials, such as bois de violette or boxwood. Balsa System. Finishes: Smooth and rustic. MSRP: $64 for rustic; $90 for smooth.

SILVER—A sterling silver band is contoured to the mouthpiece for a smooth joint. Available only in round or oval shank. Finishes: Smooth and sandblast. Available only in Europe.

SOIREE—A classic evening pipe. Sterling silver band. Balsa System. Finish: Smooth. Color: Dark gray. MSRP: $95.

CHIARA—Its color is offset with a wide brass ring and black lucite mouthpiece. Balsa System. Finish: Smooth. Shapes: 18. Color: Natural. MSRP: $75.

VIRGINIA—Lucite mouthpiece is accented by an ivorylike band with brass rings on its side. Balsa System. Finish: Smooth. Shapes: 18. Color: Natural amber. MSRP: $110.

MOKA—The Cumberland mouthpiece is separated from the stem by an ivorylike band. Balsa System. Finishes: Smooth and brownblast. Shapes: 18. Color: Walnut. MSRP: $80, smooth; $65, brownblast.

BRUNA—Color of the bowl is carried into the Cumberland mouthpiece. Brass ring. Balsa System. Finishes: Smooth and sandblast. Shapes: 24. MSRP: $98, smooth; $65, brownblast.

PORTO CERVO—A contrasting-colored briar ring has a brass ring on each side. Balsa System. Finishes: Smooth and carved. Shapes: 30. Color: Brown. MSRP: $80, smooth; $62, carved.

OSCAR—An inexpensive pipe. The Roma and Dry versions have a brass ring. Finishes: Smooth and sandblast. Shapes: 30. MSRP: $42 to $67.

ALLIGATOR—A unique "alligator" texture is carved into the briar. Cumberland mouthpiece. Inspired by Marisetta Savinelli. Balsa System. Finish: Textured. Shapes: 12. Colors: Black and brown. MSRP: $56 to $69.

LONG JOHN—Pipes of unusual length. Brass ring. Finishes: Smooth and rustic. Shapes: 6. Colors: Black in rustic and brown in smooth. MSRP: $60 to $80.

ELEGANCE—His and her pipes for brief smokes. Finish: Smooth. Shapes: 6. Colors: Lacquered in white or black. Contrasting briar ring. MSRP: $56 to $65.

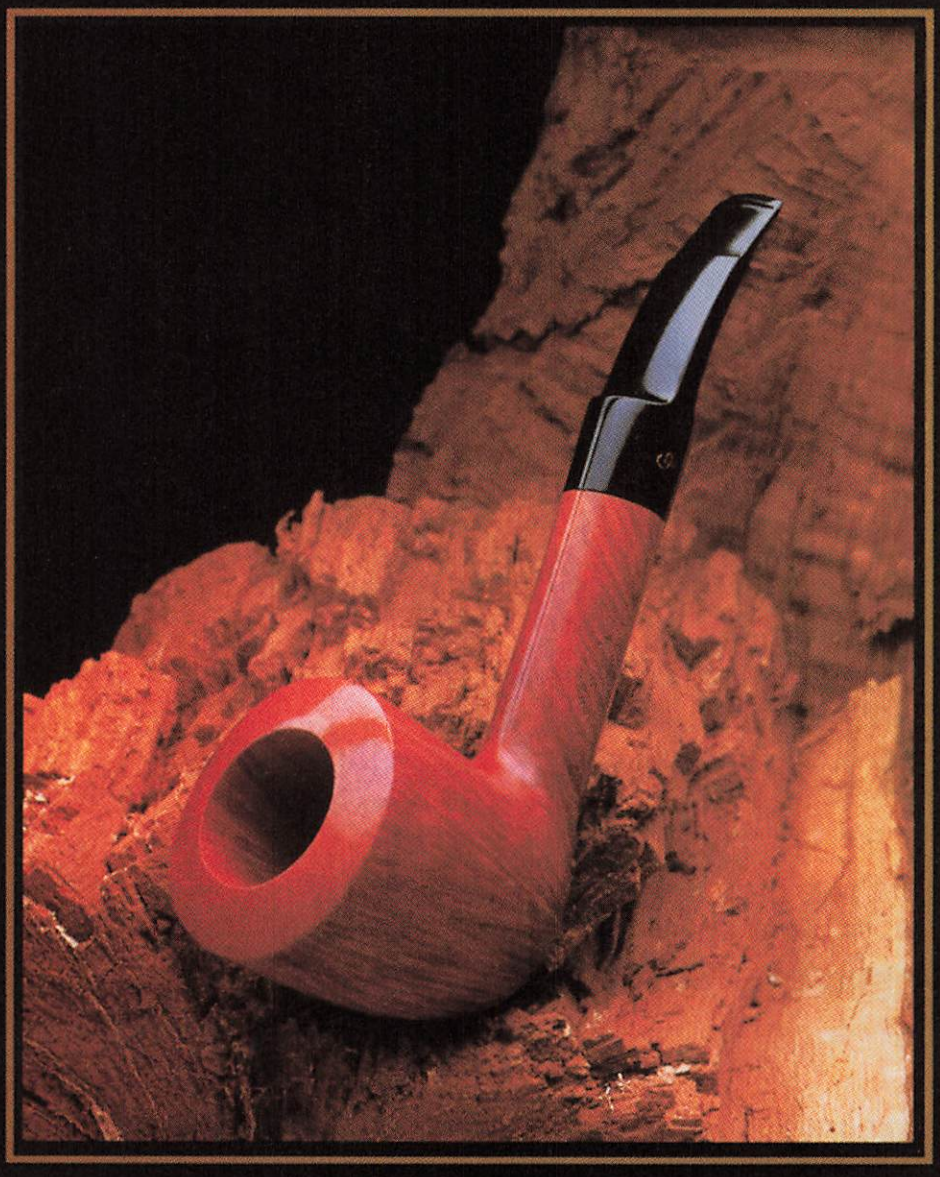
BLACK/BROWN SET—Lacquered finish. Matching pipe tool. Contrasting briar ring on both pipe and tool. Balsa System. Finish: Smooth. Shapes: 6. Colors: Black and brown. MSRP: $100 to $130.

SHAPE CHART—There are 72 shapes on the Savinelli chart; however, not every series is produced in all 72 shapes.

SIZE—If no letter appears after the shape number, the pipe is regular size. KS=King size, a larger size than regular. EX=Extraordinaire, a pipe of exceptional size, larger than king size. A regular holds 2.5-3 grams of tobacco; KS holds 3.5-4 grams; EX holds 4.5-5 grams.

BALSA SYSTEM—Uses an absorbent balsa (wood) replaceable insert. According to Savinelli, any moisture produced in the smoking process is absorbed by the insert. In addition, it is said to have a cooling effect on the smoke stream by breaking up the air flow. Most Savinelli series are referred to as convertible series—they can be smoked with or without the balsa insert in place. The balsa system has been available since 1980.

DRY SYSTEM—This system combines the balsa insert with a special mouthpiece. This mouthpiece has an air opening on the top specifically shaped to distribute smoke around the roof of the mouth, instead of all at one point.



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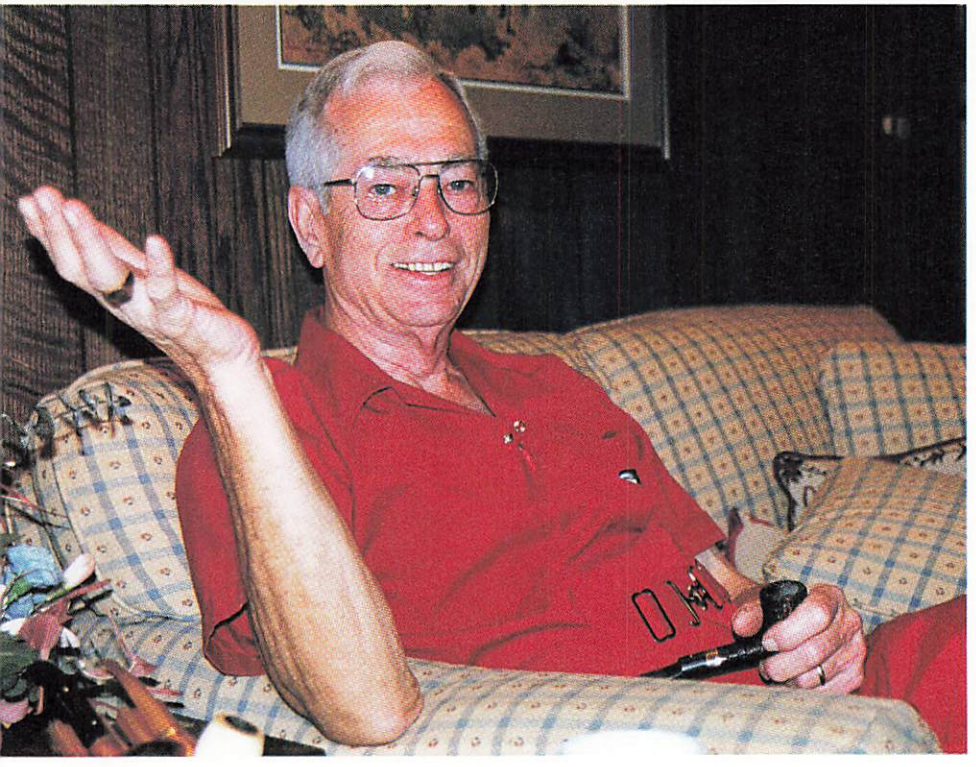
"Mr. Dunhill"

Edsel James is very sure about everything he says, especially that Dunhill pipes are the best in the world

by Chuck Stanion

With a name like Edsel, you've got to expect that the concepts of "rarity" and "collectibility" would be important elements in James' life. And if you mention James' name to pipe collectors, they will tell you he is one of the foremost Dunhill collectors anywhere. But James disagrees.

"I'm no collector," he says in his carefully crafted country-boy drawl. "And I don't know much about Dunhills," he insists. "Nobody does."



He is an energetic man who likes to pretend he is older and simpler than he really is. "I'm what they call POUD," he said.

"Proud?" I asked. "About what?"

"POUD. Poor, old, ugly and dumb."

Now, I don't know how poor he is—he caught me rummaging through his desk before I could find his checkbook. And I don't know how old he is, but I can tell you he didn't have any trouble crawling around on the floor among the pipes he had laid out, or leaping to his feet to rush into the next room for another pipe he just thought of. I don't even know how ugly you'd call him—you can see by his photo that he is no more repulsive than any of us. But I do know this: Edsel James is not dumb.

Edsel James is...well, unconventional.

He lives in a nice house in a nice town in Tennessee, which may or may not be a nice state, depending on who you ask. He is a very nice man. And he is one of the most opinionated people you will ever meet.

The first thing he wanted to know from me was whether I smoked Dunhills. "You don't even smoke a pipe, do you," he stated matter-of-factly.

I was already on the defensive. "Of course I smoke a pipe," I said. "I—"

"Well, you haven't smoked since you've been here."

"But I've only been here five minutes."

"Where's your pipe then?"

Fact is, I own only one Dunhill, and hadn't brought it. I'd left the pipe I had been smoking

Eleven of the 12 Dunhills in this set have gold fittings. The black shell briar Dunhill pictured below features a long bamboo shank and is extremely rare.

out in the car, to avoid the possibility of just such a confrontation.

"OK, Edsel, you got me. I'm not much of a Dunhill fan. I have a Stokkebye out in the car."

"You shouldn't ever leave a pipe in a hot car. Not even one of them Danish things, which ain't really pipes. These," he said, gesturing toward the floor, "now these are pipes."

There were cases and rolls and pouches all over the living room, and James got down on his hands and knees and started pulling out Dunhill after Dunhill. Smooth Dunhills. Sandblasted Dunhills. Bents, straights, big, little, gold-banded, silver-banded, smoked, unsmoked, new, old....

"Here's a shape 792," he said, holding a pipe up briefly. "Most popular shape Dunhill ever made. You don't care. You don't like Dunhills." And he slipped it back into its case.

"I never said I didn't—"

"Look at this one; a 1912 prince, that's a old pipe. First year they used patent numbers. You don't care." He put that one away too.

"But Edsel, maybe I just don't know—"

"Here's a nice pipe, stamped March 9, 1950. And here's a nice 835. But you don't care about that, it ain't Danish."

"Wait, hang on, may I see that?"

"And here's a shape 151—very rare pipe. You won't see many of those." He glanced at me out of the corner of his eye. "You don't care," he said. "It ain't shaped like somebody's spleen."

He was just kidding; there was profound humor in his expression. And I deserved it. Silly

Top to bottom, these Dunhills are dated 1917, 1936 and 1920. An example of Dunhill nomenclature is shown below. At far right is a rare ODA #846 full bent.

to go to a Dunhill collector without a Dunhill clamped in my teeth. His good-natured sarcasm made me comfortable, and soon I was laughing and crawling around on the floor, looking at pipe after pipe after pipe, with James talking the whole time.

"I don't know a lot about Dunhill pipes," he said. "I've read a lot about 'em—but so many people got so many opinions. And they're sort of belligerent about it at times...but I'll tell you this: There's no way anybody can date a Dunhill pipe with any real certainty. And the shapes; there's so many shapes that nobody can—oh, yeah, that's an LB you got there. An LB is a little 835. An LBS would be a little 843. Got one here someplace...I don't know where it is. What was I saying?"

"That nobody knows anything about Dunhills."

"Right, there's no way to know. Anybody wants to tell you everything they know about Dunhills, you let 'em, because it'll only take a minute. Now Richard Dunhill—that's old man Alfred's nephew—well he didn't come into the thing in time to learn the system. And they didn't take the time to go back and look at the archives and learn it. Now if you go into the St. Duke Street building, in the archives—and I can do that—and look at all the shape numbers they've got, well, they've got a catalog,"—he held his hands a foot apart—"that thick. There's just too many for anybody to know about.

"There is no way to get any authentic infor-

mation on Dunhill pipes. There was a guy wrote all this Dunhill information in a magazine, some years ago, and I called him and told him he was all wrong about a couple things. Well, he went back in the next issue and said, Hey, this was wrong. But that means nothing. I mean, how do you know *I'm* right? You *don't* know. I'm just a poor old dumb country boy."

"Are you telling me," I said, "that you don't know any more than anyone else about Dunhill pipes?"

He thought about how to answer that while he filled his pipe, and I was anxious to see how he would try to convince me he knew nothing while simultaneously demonstrating that he knew plenty. "I'm probably as experienced at studying those things as anybody, having read the literature and kept up with them, but that means nothing. You have to conclude that nobody really knows a lot about them." He lit his pipe thoughtfully.

"If you brought me a dozen Dunhill pipes, with no dates on them, I could probably tell you the decade they were made—I could say, 'This was made in the late '40s, early '50s,' or 'This was made in the '60s.' I could probably do that because I've seen so many examples. You gotta remember I was getting 'em in the '60s and, man, I had them by the ton, and in the '70s by the ton. But I don't consider myself any form of an authority on pipes."

James' interest in Dunhill pipes started in the 1950s, before their popularity started to grow. "And everybody thought I was nuts to smoke them," he says. "Because they were too expensive. They were $7.50 back then, $10 for smooths. Everybody said, 'Edsel, you should smoke Charatans, you should smoke Barlings, they're cheaper.' Well I did buy Charatans, and I bought Barlings, but Dunhills are better."

Dunhills are perhaps the most collected, most traded pipes in the world. But James warns that used Dunhills have to be carefully scrutinized. "When you are trading for pipes," he says, "watch it. Lots of guys will load you up with plugged pipes. They're super at that. You cannot tell it, they are so good. 837 bulldogs will burn out at the sides on the bottom, but they can plug that and rework that and man you gotta be super to tell."

"How do you know," I asked, "what to look for?"

"You just gotta be good. Cause there are some trousered apes out there who will charge you regular price knowing it's plugged. They can seal a crack too—they use a form of glue and some briar dust and mix it together and fill in the crack, and when it dries they buff it down with a little dremel tool or something and blend it all together and you cannot tell it's been done. But you don't get that kind of thing from Edsel James. Now I may be just a dumb ignorant old boy but I'm honest. These old eyes are still good."

"What about the history of Dunhill?" I

A silver mounted prince shape from 1912, the first year Dunhill stamped its pipes with patent numbers.

asked. "Do you know anything about that?"

"No," he said. "Nobody does. I do know that the first Dunhills were made in 1910, in Alfred Dunhill's home.

"You know how he discovered his method?" asked James. "He went down in the basement in the wintertime to make him some pipes. And he made one but left the other one down laying there by the boiler. Well, sometime next summer he thought of it, and he went down there and it was all shriveled up—that heat had shriveled it. That's where the name Shell comes from, from the way the wood shrivels. He had made him two pipes; the one he already had and this shriveled one, and that's the beginning of the Dunhill world in 19 and 10."

Patent numbers are an important aspect of the history of Dunhill pipes, but they were not immediately instituted, says James. "There weren't any patent numbers in 1910. There were some numbers, but I don't know what they were. The first patent number was in 1912. American patents didn't start until 1916.

"Alfred Dunhill was like me; if you do something, do it right. He decided to really cure his pipes. He wanted to do it right, so he cured that thing for two full years in a big old bucket or trough or tray of sand, and he put some stuff in the sand—nobody knows what he put in it.

"Now when he got the pipe out of there it was so hard you couldn't drive a nail in it. You could crack it, but it was so hard it wouldn't absorb *anything*—it would float forever. That's why Dunhills smoke better than any other pipe. Dunhill never made a bad smoking pipe; it doesn't exist. Not like those Danish things. What kind of tobacco do you smoke?"

I was on firm ground here, I was sure. I didn't smoke English pipes, but I liked English blends. However, before I could open my mouth James said, "I bet you smoke English, right?"

I nodded.

"*Don't* smoke that English tobacco. Eventually it will ruin your pipe. It'll get slick and absorb so much of that gunk that comes from latakia tobacco that what you've got is a stew cooking in the pipe. And one day you'll smell it, and that smell will never, ever go away. Best thing to do is take it outside and drop it in the trashcan.

"Now perique will not hurt your pipe, but latakia is altered and it will stink, I don't care where you smoke it, no one wants you around. You know how it's made?"

"Sure," I said. "It's hung up and a wood fire smolders under it to—"

"Camel dung," said James.

"Excuse me?"

"They burn camel dung to give it flavor. That's why it smells like camel dung, because it *is* camel dung. It's got camel dung soot all over it. So get away from that stuff, and get away from those pipes you got, because in 10 years they'll be soggy and wet and they'll sweat and stink and you'll have no friends and your wife will leave you. Get you a Dunhill. Fifties or '60s, it don't matter. But it's got to be clean inside, no char. Come to me, I'll make sure you get a good one.

"You remind me of one boy who goes to all the shows. I saw him at a show down in Chattanooga, and he was buying up stuff like that—Danish and Italian stuff—and I said to him, 'Hey, c'mere. Don't waste your money. If you want to buy a pipe, buy yourself a *Dunhill*.' Now at every show he wears a nice suit of clothes, he's got about 115 or 120 Dunhills, and every time I see him he says, 'That's what I got because of you, Edsel.' Now you take my advice and see if you don't tell me the same thing in 10 years."

"OK, Edsel," I said. "I'll give Dunhills a try. When a collector like you makes a recommendation, I listen."

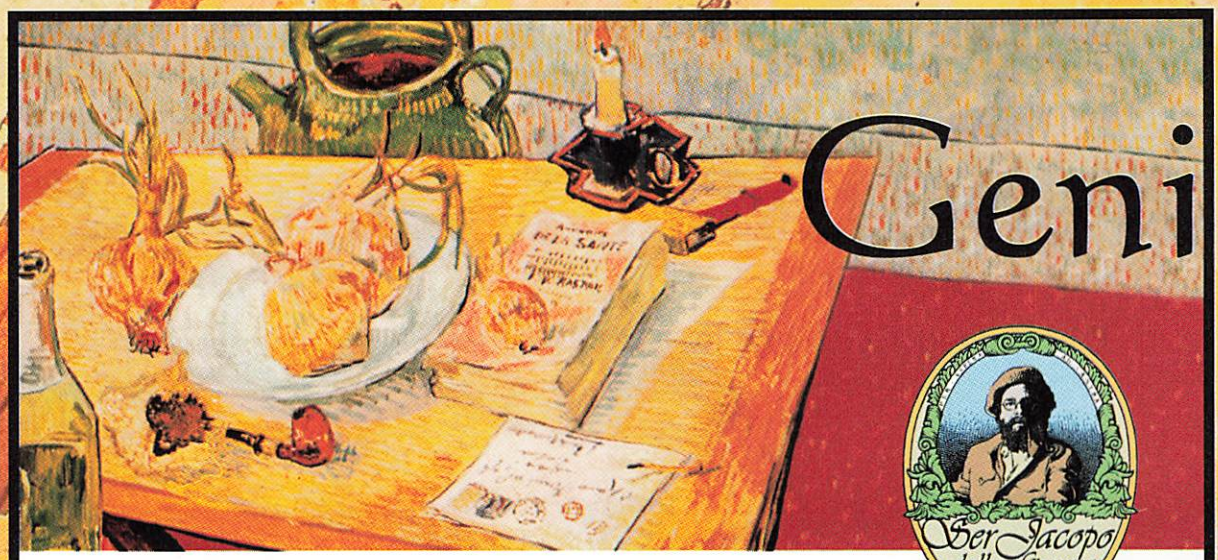
"Right. But I keep telling you I'm not a collector. I buy some pipes, I sell some pipes, I buy some other pipes.

"And make sure, when you write your article, to say I only mark up my pipes 2 percent. Anybody that knows me will be expecting that."

"Two percent?"

"That's right. I buy for $1 and sell for $3."

P&T



Genius

Ser Jacopo dalla Gemma
pipe fatte a mano

Picta 10

The Van Gogh "Picta" Collection
by Ser Jacopo

The 14 new "Picta" pipes pay homage to the genius of Vincent Van Gogh. Designed and handmade in limited quantities by the craftsmen of Ser Jacopo in Italy, who were inspired by the many Van Gogh paintings and drawings depicting pipes and pipe smokers, such as the example above.

Distributed by Marble Arch, Ltd.
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Picta Collection Pipes are available in 5 finishes:

Rustic
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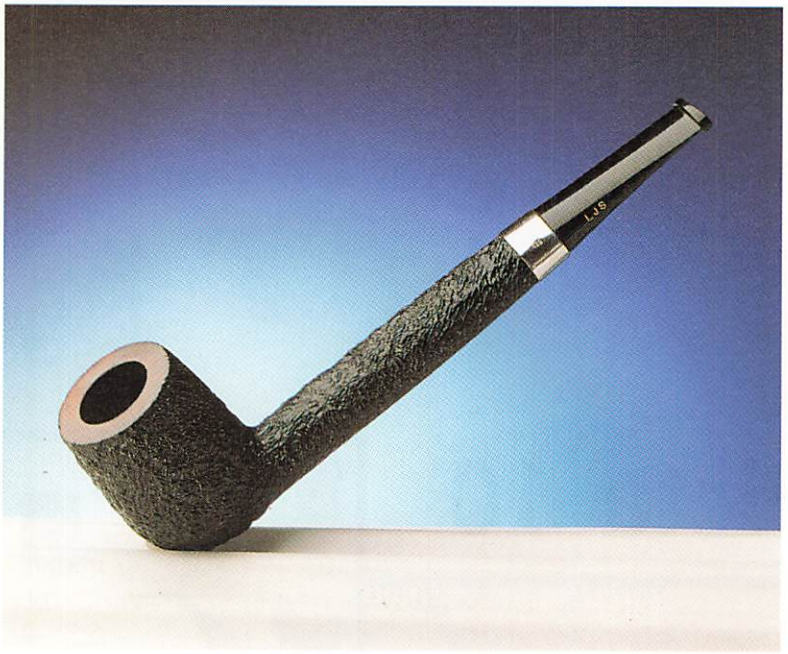
Walnut Smooth
Natural Smooth

Product Showcase

Some gift-giving ideas for the pipe smoker in your life...or for yourself —if you've been very very good this year



Hand-turned from the finest Grecian briar, all Ferndown pipes are fitted with hand-cut mouthpieces for fine balance and comfort. Ferndowns are oil-cured and finished by hand to the highest standards. Available in five finishes: Bark (black finish highlighted in red); Bark Vintage (mid brown); Bark Natural (unstained natural briar); Reo (deep plum brown); and Root (natural root with a hint of background color to emphasize the grain).

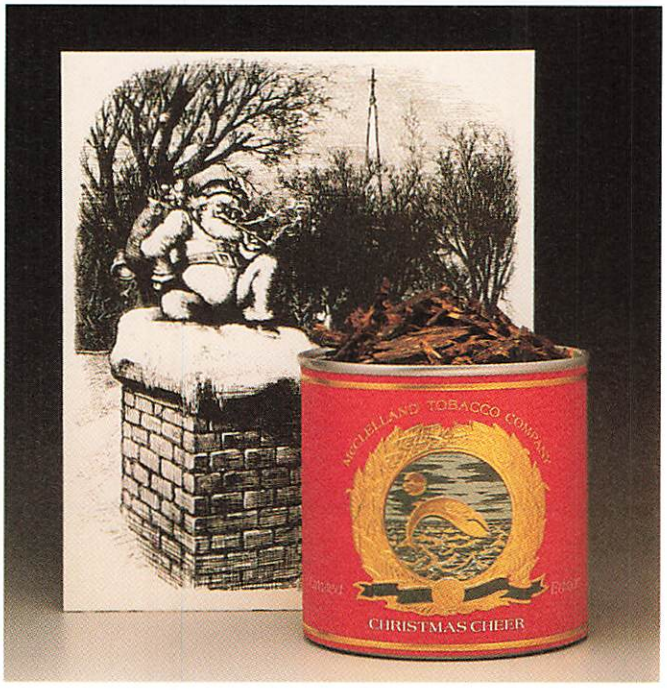
Ferndown pipes do not have fills, so the Root finish is most rare. Distributed by James Norman Ltd., Ferndown is available at your local tobacconist; or for the shop nearest you that carries the Ferndown line, call 800.525.5629.

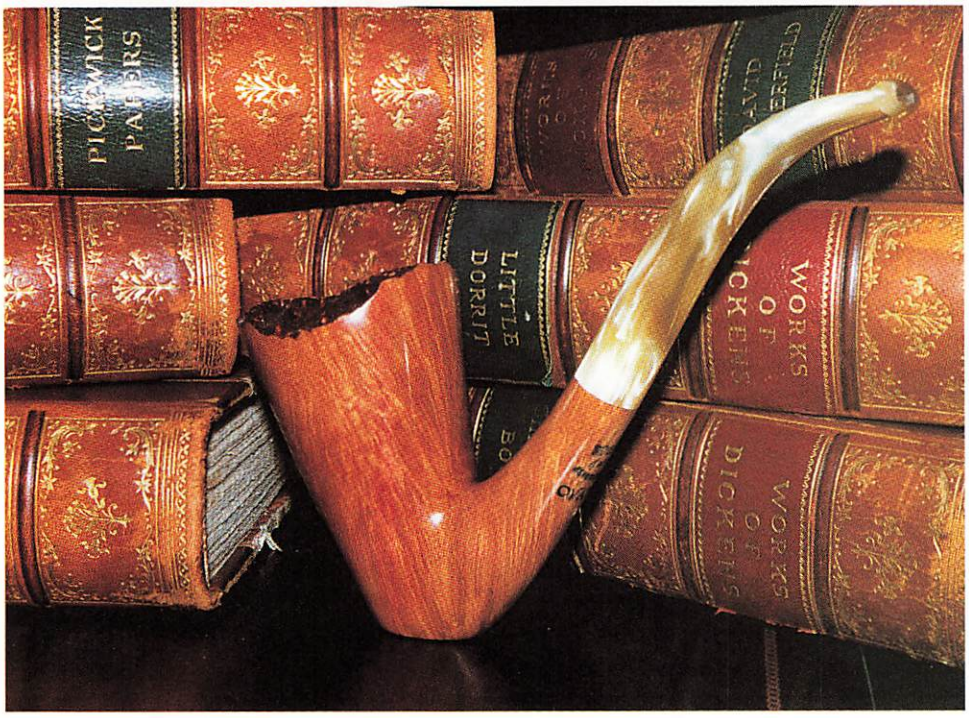
McClelland Tobacco Company continues its annual tradition with this 1997 version of Christmas Cheer, an exceptionally fine vintage tobacco hand-blended and aged in pressed cakes to develop its natural mellowness. This blend is made from a special selection of the finest 1991-crop orange-red North Carolina leaves.

McClelland's Limited Edition blends are introduced each year, highlighting vintage tobacco of exceptional quality and unusual character. Whereas many blends are reconfigured from year to year to maintain consistency according to current crop conditions, Christmas Cheer is the exception. Christmas Cheer is made up of the very finest tobaccos of a particular vintage, with no worry of maintaining flavor or appearance for the next year, but actually striving instead to present the unique character of a single crop and area. Limited edition means, in this case, exactly what it says. When it is gone, there is no more.

McClelland offers a full complement of fine tinned blends for every taste. Of particular interest are its cigar blends, Dominican Glory and Dominican Glory Maduro. Seasoned with matured Virginias, these blends contain aged Dominican cigar leaf for the combination of the best of cigar and pipe tobaccos.

McClelland Tobaccos are available at fine retailers everywhere.



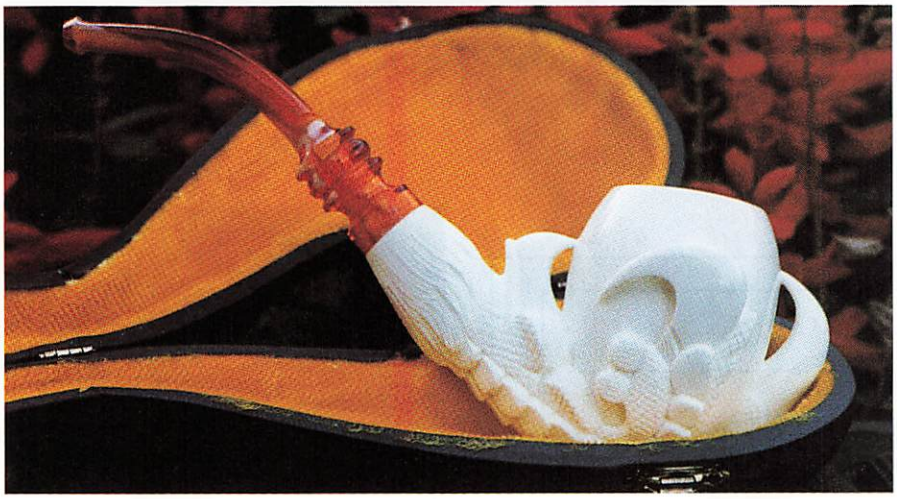


Randy Wiley, noted American pipemaker, has introduced his much-awaited high-grade line of pipes: the Ovation line. Completely handmade and hand-finished, they are flawlessly grained pipes of Grecian briar in both freehand and traditional styles. Especially notable is the glasslike and impeccable finish of this grade pipe.

The pipes come in leather sleeves with the Wiley Ovation logo, and the pipes themselves are stamped with the Ovation mark and the year (1997 only, so far). Suggested retail prices begin at $600. Other Wiley grades are available from $75.

Should an even more perfect pipe present itself, Wiley is considering adding a "Standing Ovation" to his line. He estimates that possibly only one a year may surface.

Quantities of the Ovation line are very limited, since only one in thousands of pipes achieve this grade. Available at your local tobacconist.



Handcarved Turkish meerschaum pipes by Bekler, distributed by C.A.O. International. C.A.O. imports only pipes handcarved from the purest 10 percent of the meerschaum mined in Eskisehir, Turkey. Available in a multitude of styles, including smooths, florals, heirlooms, calabashes and figurals. Eagle claws, such as the one pictured (MSRP $250), are available in many different styles and prices. The suggested retail price for the smooth is $200, and for the heirloom, $200. Available at fine tobacco shops, or for the retailer nearest you, call 800.237.8226 or 615.352.0587.

Famous for its quality bulk tobaccos, Cornell and Diehl also provides nine quality tinned blends. Vacuum-sealed plastic pouches keep the tobacco fresh in the tin for six weeks or six years—perfect for cellaring. Red Stag contains Latakia, Turkish, red Virginia and bright Virginia flake; Black Duck contains Latakia, Turkish and toasted brown Cavendish; Brigadier contains Latakia, cubed Burley, Perique and toasted brown Cavendish with a light fruit flavor; Rajah's Court contains red Virginia, bright Virginia ribbon, Turkish and Latakia; da Vinci contains a generous percentage of aged Latakia, rough-cut Burley and bright Virginia flake; Captain Earle's Private Stock is rich in Latakia and red Virginia, a blend of eight selected tobaccos stoved and prepared by Hermit Tobacco Works; Captain Earle's Honor is a blend of red Virginia, mild Cavendish, Turkish and Perique; Strathspey is a classic Scottish blend, heavy with Latakia and deep Orientals, with black and light pressed Cavendish "wi' a wee dram o' scotch"; and Pennington Gap contains nutty Kentucky cube-cut Burley and rich black Cavendish with Perique and a little bourbon.

The latest addition to the Mastro de Paja family of pipes is the Cerimonia Pipe & Tie Gift Set. This handsome set features an Italian handmade pipe, a 100 percent silk tie embossed with designs of a Mastro de Paja pipe, and a uniquely handmade briar tamper with silver accent. Ties are available in navy blue or burgundy. Pipes come in four finishes: dark red, carved, dark brown or natural. Prices start at $240 retail.

Also just released is a limited edition 25th Anniversary Pipe, with gold band and the Mastro de Paja sun emblem mounted on the mouthpiece.

Find these items at your local tobacconist, or call 800.362.7876 for more information.

In distinctive combination carved/smooth designs, with decorative bands, these pipes offer beauty and individuality in the same package. Handmade in Italy, RoverArt pipes are fashioned from Sardinian, Ligurian and Calabrian aged briar. Each mouthpiece is drawn from a slab of acrylic and made entirely by hand for comfort and perfection of detail.

For the RoverArt retailer nearest you, contact Monjure International, 12 Cedar Creek Drive, Jamestown, NC 27282; 910.889.2390.

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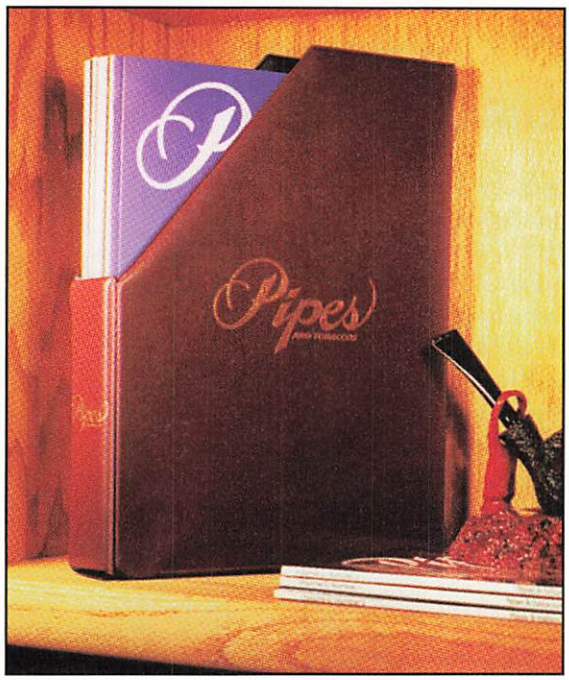

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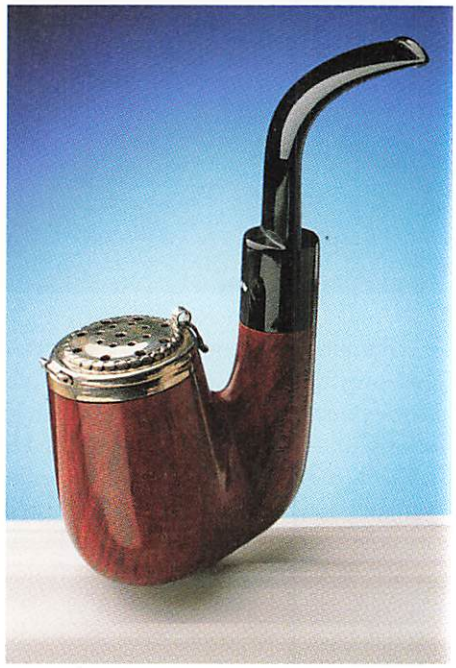
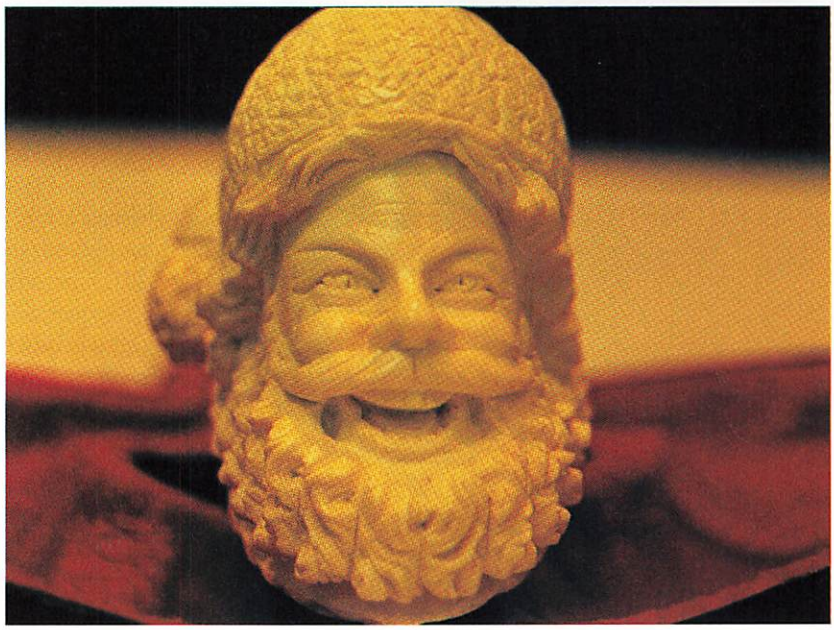


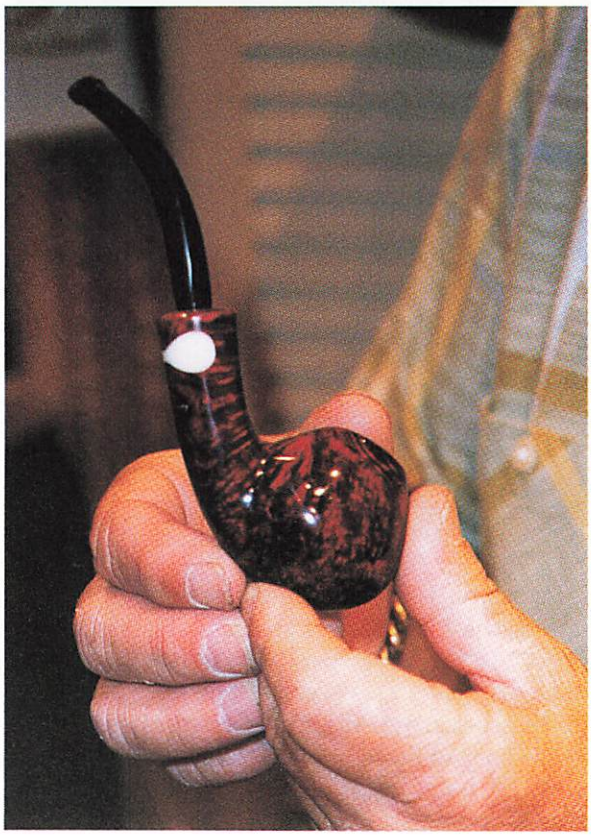
Handmade by the Ascorti family, Caminetto pipes are available in rustic, New Dear and smooth finishes. The Oom Paul pictured here is outfitted with a silver wind cap to maintain a proper burn in windy conditions. Prices vary according to size and finish. For the name of a Caminetto retailer near you, call James Norman Ltd., 800.525.5629.

Colibri's Xtreme lighter breaks new ground in lighter technology with a combination of design and engineering. A simple turn of the altitude adjustment ring guarantees the Xtreme will light as easily at 10,000 feet as it will at sea level. And the wind-resistant Quantum Electro-Flame ignition system provides a dependable flame that will reignite if blown out. Available in four styles, with a suggested retail price of $100.

Find the Xtreme wherever Colibri is sold, or for the retailer nearest you, contact Colibri at 800.556.7354.

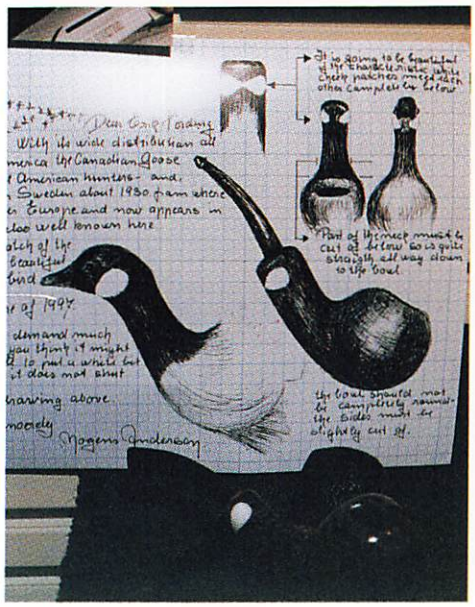
For the seasonally inclined, here is the perfect Christmas pipe. Handcarved by Kamuran Bilgic, this pipe represents a smiling Saint Nick, complete with beard and cap. Using meerschaum mined from a depth of more than 150 feet, this pipe is the purest block meerschaum available, and retails for $95. For a retailer near you, contact Monjure International, 12 Cedar Creek Drive, Jamestown, NC 27282; or call 910.889.2390.

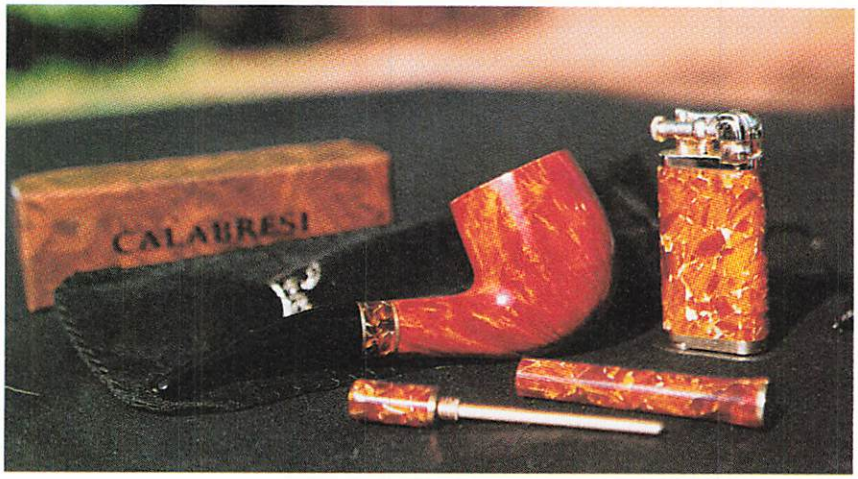




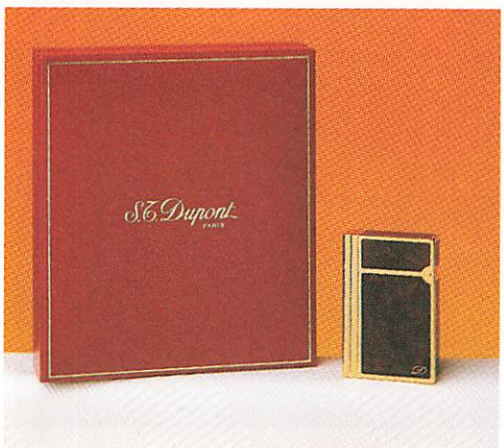
Nording Hunting Pipes are an impressive blend of art and nature. The markings, curves and proportions of this pipe, called the Pheasant, are inspired by the wild Canadian goose, and one cannot hold this pipe without being transported to the North Woods. An avid hunter, Eric Nording has developed three designs for the Hunting Pipe series so far, with the Pheasant being the first. The smooth version of the Pheasant is $175; a sandblast is also available ($125).

For the name of the retailer nearest you, call Hollco-Rohr at 800.24SMOKE.





Cristom Import and Export Inc. recently unveiled the ultimate Calabresi pipe set. The pipe and its accessories—a tamper, pick and lighter—are detailed in a tortoise-shell finish. Also available from Cristom is the Thomas Cristiano line of pipes first displayed at the Orlando RTDA trade show. Cristom has a full line of ashtrays, pipe tools, pipes, pipe cabinets, pipe racks and humidors. Cristom products are available at your local tobacconist, or call 813.961.7595 or 800.886.7252 for the name of a shop near you that carries the Cristom line.

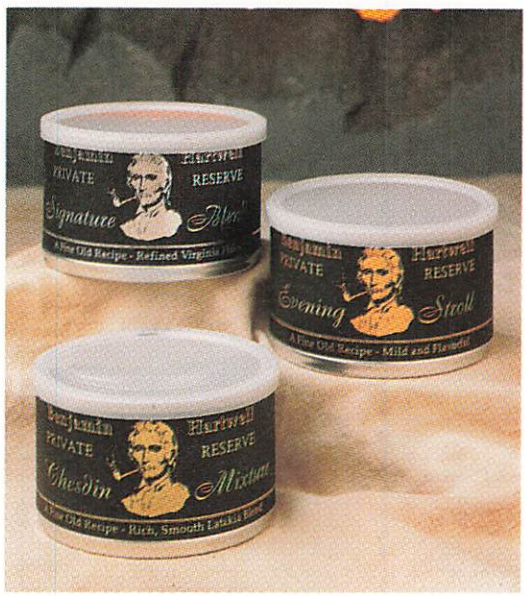


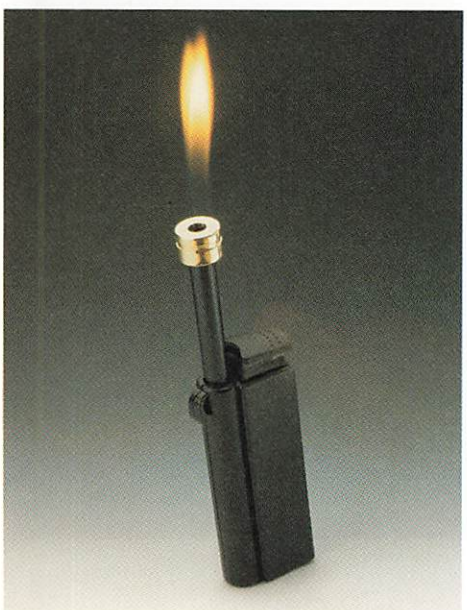
S.T. Dupont lighters are available with a 90-degree flame for pipes, with a 45-degree flame for pipes and cigars, or with standard flame. This gold-plated lighter is called "Diamonds," and retails for $405. The other Dupont lighter is a "Tortoise Shell" Gatsby-style, hand-made in Chinese Lacquer, $670.

There are dozens of other lighter styles available from Dupont, including table lighters.

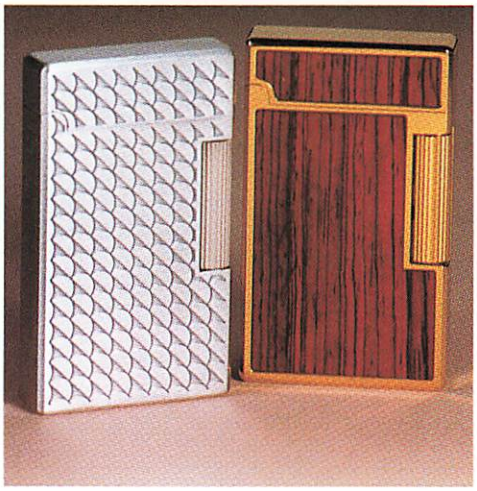
Dupont also offers leather cases for its lighters, as well as humidors, leather cigar cases, cigar tubes, cutters and ashtrays.

A new line of pipe tobaccos for the discriminating smoker with an affection for the traditional, Benjamin Hartwell Tobaccos were introduced this year at the Orlando RTDA Trade Show. Currently available in three different mixtures, including a latakia/English blend, a Virginia blend and a light aromatic, Benjamin Hartwell comes in 50 gram tins ($7 each). For the name of a retailer near you, contact Consolidated Cigar Corporation, 5900 N. Andrews Avenue, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309-7098; call 305.772.9000; or fax 305.938.7811.





Great for hard-to-reach places, for lighting grills and campfires, but especially practical for pipe smokers, the V.T. (Vector) Spider is available in black or white, and retails for $18.95. The Spider comes in a collector's gift box, is refillable, and a great all-around lighter. The extendible wand allows the flame to burn level with the top of the lighter, or as high as 1.5 inches above the body of the lighter. Available at your local tobacconist, or contact KGM Industries, 213.262.7200, for retailer information.

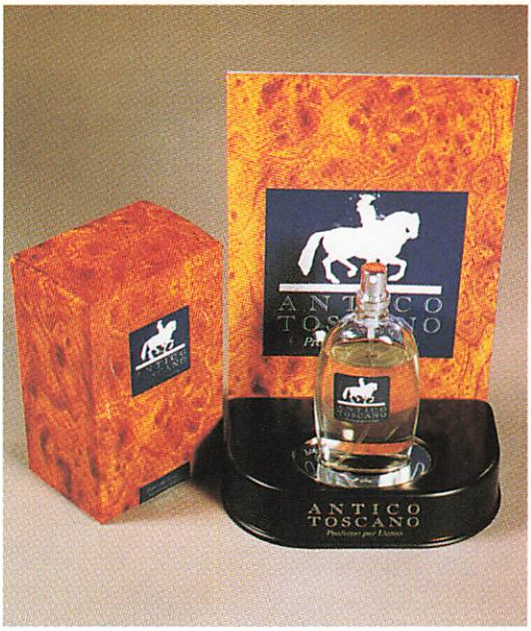


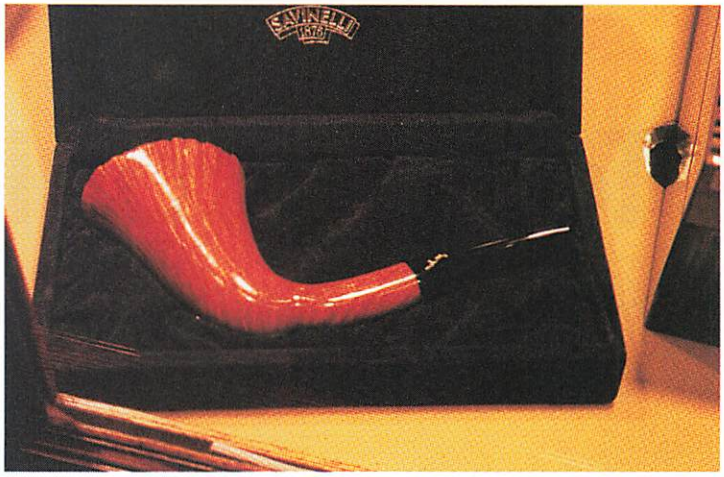
The Savinelli Autograph is a pipe of profound beauty and collectibility. Savinelli offers a full line of pipes in all price ranges, including a pipe of the year.

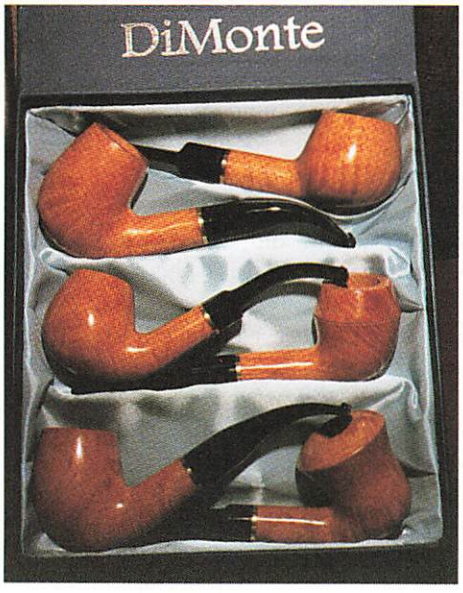
Savinelli pipe and cigar accessories are also available, including a new Double Corona lighter. The Double Corona has a patented dual-flame nozzle that produces the widest flame among all cigar lighters. With solid brass construction and large capacity tank, the pewter finish lighter retails for $150; the gold-plated with exotic cocobolo wood panels retails for $275.

Savinelli even has a new line of fragrances for men: the Antico Toscano Men's Fragrance Line. A wonderful scent from Italy, it is available in a spray cologne ($25), spray aftershave ($23), deodorant stick ($12) and shower/shampoo combo ($8).

For information on the Savinelli retailer near you, contact Savinelli Pipes Inc., P.O. Box 526, 1002 Morrisville Parkway, Morrisville, NC 27560; call 919.481.0511; or fax 919.481.1948.







Handmade in Sheffield, England, these quality pewter accessories will make any smoker happy. With a heavy pewter base, this Legends of England pipe stand will display your favorite pipe with aristocratic flair ($30). And you can carry your favorite cigar along with a nip of your favorite beverage all in one package with the pewter flask/cigar holder ($80). For the retailer nearest you, contact Legends of England Inc., 190 Bay Avenue, Highlands, NJ 07732; call 908.872.9400; or fax 908.872.9441.

1997 marks the return to pipe manufacture of a family with a long tradition in the industry. Ludwig Rosenberger started work in a pipe factory in 1920, opening his own factory in the 1940s, where he manufactured Arlington Briar Pipes. Mel Rosenberger, who began his career at age six working in his father's factory, has now launched DiMonte Pipes, which will become available at tobacconists around Thanksgiving of this year.

DiMonte pipes are offered in a variety of colors and finishes, and available in seven different lines, with prices from $50 to $110. Manufactured under contract in Italy and fashioned from the best Sardinian briar, each line of DiMonte pipes is available in 12 different shapes. The line shown here is the Ultima, retailing at $110 each.

For the name of the tobacconist nearest you that carries DiMonte pipes, contact Supreme Imports Corp., 10563 NW 53rd Street, Sunrise, FL 33351; call 954.746.3808; or fax 954.746.9225.

Tennessee Tobacconist

Uptown's Smoke Shop gears its operation toward the high-grade pipe market

by Chuck Stanion

Big things are happening in Nashville. Important events. Matters of consequence. We're not talking silly insignificant subjects like politics or music or economics—we're talking *pipes.* Nashville is *the* place for pipes. And a driving force behind the success of pipes in Nashville is Uptown's Smoke Shop. Uptown's is supporting every facet of the hobby through clubs, newsletters, information networks and—best of all—by importing and supplying some of the highest-quality pipes in the world. There are pipes at Uptown's that have been nearly impossible for collectors to find.

The recently formed Nashville pipe club, NAPS (Nashville Area Pipe Smokers), meets monthly at Valentino's Restaurant on West End. Uptown's doesn't officially sponsor the club, but Uptown's pipe buyer, Keith Moore, is NAPS' founder.

Moore's limitless enthusiasm for pipes was not only his motivation for forming the club, but for building relationships with some of the foremost pipemakers in the world, as well. It is the marriage of his profession to his passion for pipes that is making Moore a dominant personality in the pipe world. "I have the best job there is," he says. "I see some of the finest pipes in the world. I meet the finest pipe craftsmen and some of the most interesting pipe smokers you can imagine."

Moore uses his connections with the smoke shop and with premier pipemakers around the world to enhance the club meetings and recruit some of those pipe smokers. He routinely goes to NAPS meetings with a selection of S. Bang, Jess Chonowitsch and Julius Vesz pipes. At the August meeting he also had three Renier Barbis and a Lars Ivarsson, as well as some Dupont pipe lighters. NAPS is probably the only active pipe club able to provide its members with hands-on opportunities to see such hard-to-get new pipes.

Another prominent member of the Nashville Area Pipe Smokers is Philip Thompson, in charge of product development at C.A.O. Meerschaum. C.A.O. is currently working on four new pipe tobaccos, developing the highest-quality blends available. And Thompson has been bringing prospective blends to the pipe club meetings to gather reactions. The final decisions are still in the future, but members of NAPS are privileged to taste these blends and experience what C.A.O. is working with.

NAPS currently has about 40 active members, and is growing fast. The meetings are social gatherings more than anything else, with just enough club business conducted at the beginning of each meeting to keep it official. Like any pipe club, though, the predominant topic of conversation revolves around smoke.

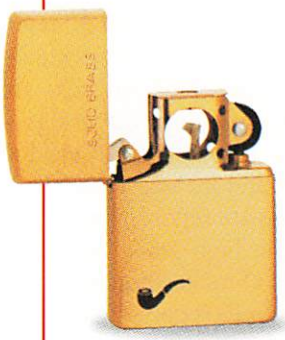
The meeting room looks good filled with smoke; it looks natural. It's a basement room in the restaurant, with stone and brick walls and heavy beams in the ceiling and a fireplace in the corner. The members circulate or sit and talk; they smoke fine tobaccos and handle beautiful pipes. But they also discuss the future.

A Nashville Pipe Show is being planned for 1998, to fall on the Saturday before the Sunday opening of the Retail Tobacco Dealers of America (RTDA) Trade Show to be held in Nashville in August.

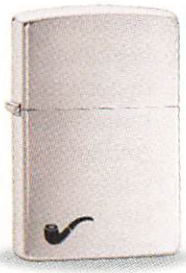
"It's the perfect time to have a show," says Moore. "People attending the Trade Show only need to come a day early to go to the NAPS pipe show." There will be good reason to attend that show: Arrangements are being solidified for bringing in some of the fine pipemakers that Uptown's has been promoting. "It's not official yet," says Moore. "But I really think it's going to work out. Jess Chonowitsch will be here; he's already agreed.▶

The beauty of the Zippo pipe chimney is how well it works, not how good it looks.

That is, until you slip it into one of these.



Brush Brass



Brush Chrome

Black Matte

Scrimshaw Ship

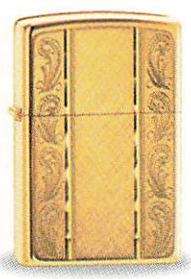
Black Matte w/Zippo & Border

Toledo Majestic Eagle

Gold Plated Floral

Solid Brass Manhattan Nights

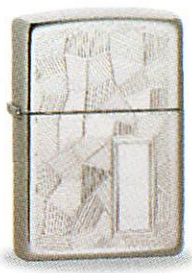
Gold Plated Black Elegance



After Five Fifth Avenue

Brass Emblem Eagle Over Mesa

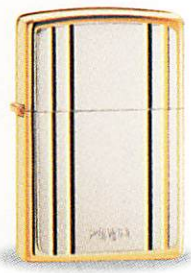
Metallique "Windy"



Sterling Shimmer

High Polish Chrome Zuni

After Five Urban Cowboy



Gold/Silver Tryan

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Celebrate longevity with the *Zippo 65th Anniversary Commemorative*! Zippo's 1997 Limited Edition Collectible of the Year is displayed in a keepsake tin bearing images from Zippo's illustrious history.

The patented pipe chimney of the Zippo pipe lighter may not be pretty, but it provides a reliable, steady, horizontal flame that burns your tobacco, not your pipe. That's basic. It also fits in any one of the hundreds of handsomely designed Zippo cases. That's the beauty.

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Three stunning bamboo-shanked Chonowitsch pipes.

But also tentatively scheduled are Per Hansen and Ulf Noltensmeier of S. Bang, Julius Vesz, Giancarlo Guidi of Ser Jacopo—we also hope to get Mike Butera and Bill Taylor. I don't know if I can convince Lars Ivarsson to come, but I'm going to try. Can you imagine all those fine pipemakers all in one place at the same time? Wow! I can't wait. I wonder what they'll talk about?"

With an international assemblage of talent like that, one sure topic of conversation will be the National Pipe Club that Uptown's Smoke Shop is helping to get started. "I'm really excited about that," says Moore. With the same acronym as the Nashville Area Pipe Smokers, the National Association of Pipe Smokers is just getting underway. "Uptown's is funding the initial startup costs," says Moore, "but it's not a marketing ploy. They are staying in the background. The company is interested in anything that helps the hobby of pipe smoking."

The day after the National Association of Pipe Smokers was awarded its charter it already had 180 members, from virtually every state. Its purpose, says Moore, "is to build camaraderie and a foundation of unity among pipe smokers in the United States." Membership costs $30 per year or, for members of pipe clubs affiliated with the National Association, $20 per year. Moore reports that the Southwest Pipe & Cigar League and the Conclave of Richmond Pipe Smokers have already joined.

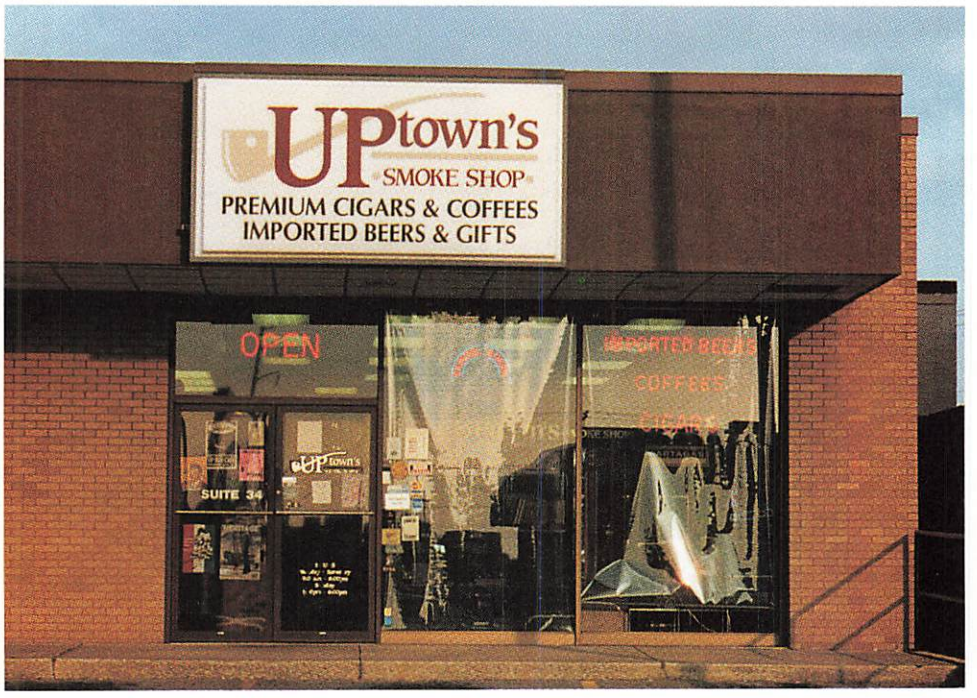
The Association will publish a quarterly newsletter, and over the next two years sponsor three pipe-smoking contests, run with the same stringent rules as was the International Pipe Smoking Championship held in Hungary last October. "It's time we got serious here in the states," says Moore. "Pipe clubs and smoking championships are significant, respected, highly regarded functions in Europe."

The art of pipe smoking is definitely gaining momentum in the United States. More and more pipe clubs are springing up across the nation; pipe smokers are beginning to appreciate these gatherings as opportunities for fellowship, for making business contacts and lifelong friendships. And tobacco shops are reporting increased sales—especially in high-grade, high-dollar pipes. Uptown's Smoke Shop is a prime example of the trend, reports Stacy Harmon, the manager at Uptown's. "We expect to sell only about 100 more pipes this year than last year," he says. "But the dollar amount will be nearly double."

Uptown's is having a rough time trying to keep enough high-grade pipes in stock. Currently back-ordered with Jess Chonowitsch for a full year, Uptown's keeps a waiting list of customers who want high-grade pipes.

However, even with people waiting for pipes, the small stock that Uptown's is able to keep on its shelves is museum quality. The impossibly hard-to-find high-grades: Vesz, Ivarsson, Chonowitsch, Bang, Nordh. And the slightly more accessible lines: Ser Jacopo, Don Carlos, Dunhill, Nording, Radice, Castello, Ashton. It is simply a terrific shop for pipes.

"When the Chonowitsch order came in," says Moore, "we sold all eight in two days. We talked him into sending us 26 more pieces a month ago, and now have three left. We have an order in for 45 more—of which 22 are already sold." Other collector-grade pipes are selling out, too. Eight Bang pipes went in two days. The Bo Nordh pipes that are on the way are spoken for. "It is nothing short of amazing," says Moore. "I'm considering putting a two-piece limit on some of these pipes, just so people can have a chance to see them before they are sold out."



Uptown's offers the near-impossible: a selection of S. Bang pipes.

These pipes are not cheap, so the fact that they are selling so quickly is significant. Chonowitsch, Bang and Ivarsson pipes start at about $700 and go up to $4,000. The Bo Nordhs that Uptown's has ordered sell for $3,800 apiece. Vesz pipes can go all the way to $10,000.

The really astonishing part of all this is that prices are probably going to go *up*, as dictated by the laws of supply and demand. "You're killing me!" says Julius Vesz when Moore calls him for more pipes. "What!" says Jess Chonowitsch, "It will take me a year to make the pipes you want!"

So next time you are in Nashville, stop in at Uptown's to see some amazing pipes. It is an unpretentious shop in a small strip mall, but the pipes are...well, the best there are. ***P&T***

Uptown's Smoke Shop is located at 3900 Hillsboro Road, Nashville, TN 37215; Uptown's toll-free PipeLine is 888.292.9576. There is one caveat to keep in mind: Out-of-state purchases are refundable in store credit only. Be sure you like what you buy.

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The Perfect Pipe

by Richard S. Newcombe

He was in his early 30s and had smoked one or two cigars a day for the past three years. I met him at the West Coast Pipe and Cigar Expo in Los Angeles, and he said he was interested in learning more about pipes.

"Some pipes look beautiful, like works of art," he said. "But it seems like there's so much effort involved just to learn how to do it right. With a cigar, I cut the end and light it. That's all you have to do to get a really good smoke."

I agreed that you can get a really good smoke from a cigar, but if you want to take it to the next level, to the level of a really great smoke, to a feeling of total relaxation and satisfaction, then you need to discover the pleasures of a pipe. Albert Einstein, the greatest scientist of the 20th century, said that his pipe contributed to contemplation and was invaluable in helping him relax and think clearly. He said that his pipe helped him to be objective in his outlook on life.

The young man asked me to tell him more. "I really am interested in pipes," he said. "I just don't know much about them." Pipes have been around for thousands of years, I said, but the briarwood pipes that are popular today were first discovered only 150 years ago. And it took that long for a handful of pipemakers to learn how to make the perfect pipe. I told him that I switched from cigarettes to pipes when I was in my 20s and have smoked a pipe for the past 20 years. During that time I have tried hundreds of different types, shapes, brands and models. I have read books and articles and even traveled to Europe in search of the ideal pipe.

There are some very good American-made pipes, and some excellent pipes coming out of England, Italy and other countries, but the pipes that are beyond comparison, in my opinion, are the pipes made in Scandinavia. But remember, I said, not all Scandinavian pipes are beyond comparison. It is only the pipes made under the following names: Jess Chonowitsch, S. Bang, Lars Ivarsson and Bo Nordh. The first three are from Denmark, while Bo Nordh lives in Sweden. They all relied heavily on advice from Sixten Ivarsson, who has been called the greatest pipemaker of this century. Sixten's pipes were stamped "An Ivarsson Product." Sixten made nearly all of the pipes, but his son Lars and Jess Chonowitsch also made some that were stamped "An Ivarsson Product." They were the only pipemakers granted that honor.

"What makes these pipes so good?" my new friend asked. It is a combination of factors, I explained, including the highest-quality materials possible, unbelievably expert craftsmanship, and the painstaking attention to every detail imaginable. These carvers also are extremely creative in designing their pipes, even when making what is known as a classic shape.

I related some history about Bo Nordh. Bo's legs were paralyzed in a motorcycle accident when he was a teenager, and he lives in a farmhouse in Sweden, where he makes only 30 or 40 pipes a year—and that is his full-time job!

Most pipemakers pay between $0.10 and $10 for a block of raw briar. Bo pays $80 or more for the absolute finest briar available and then lets the wood dry out in his workshop for years and years—in some cases for 20 years. He turns his pipe bowls by hand using a sanding wheel. After the bowl is turned and stained, he lets it air out for another two or three months. He says the wood expands and contracts slightly during this period, and he does not want to fit the mouthpiece until the wood is totally and completely dry.

Now compare this with the average factory that grinds out thousands of pipes each week, turning bowls and fitting stems almost at the same time. That's just one little example of what I mean by attention to detail.

"How much do his pipes cost?" the young man asked. A lot, I said. But if you

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A Jess Chonowitsch creation, such as this, can cost upward of $2,000. But, says Newcombe, it is well worth it.

are spending, say, $10 a day on cigars, that's $3,650 per year. That's about what a typical Bo Nordh pipe would cost.

"You're crazy," he said. "Who would spend so much on a pipe?" Well, there must be plenty of people, I answered, because Bo has a six-month waiting list for his pipes. Once you try one, you can never go back to ordinary pipes or even super expensive cigars. There is no comparison. You'll enter that next level of enjoyment that I was talking about.

But not all of these pipes are so expensive. You can get a beautiful sandblast Jess Chonowitsch for $600, and I absolutely guarantee that you'll get a better smoke from it every time than you will from a $30 cigar. Also, don't forget that these pipes will outlast you. They can be enjoyed year after year for a lifetime. You do need to rotate them, though. It's no good to try to smoke the same pipe over and over, day after day, without rest. If I smoke the same pipe once or twice a day, then I'll let it rest for the next day or two.

The young man asked if I would recommend starting out with one of these super high-grade pipes. No, I said, for the same reason that you wouldn't want to learn to drive in a Rolls Royce. I told him that I started out with pipes made by Peterson, Stanwell, Comoy, Savinelli and some of the other extremely reputable brand names. I said that he should visit his local tobacconist to find five or six good pipes, priced between $50 and $150 each, and learn how to smoke them. I know it sounds weird: learning how to smoke. But pipes are different from other types of smoking.

I believe that cigarettes are like watching television, cigars are like going to the movies, and pipes are like reading books. You had to learn how to read, but aren't you glad you made the effort? I also told my new friend that he should experiment with the hundreds of different pipe tobaccos to see what he likes. I gave him my phone number and encouraged him to call me if he had any questions.

The call came six months later, and he had only one question: "How can I get one of those high-grade pipes you told me about? I've been smoking one or two pipe bowls a day since we talked—and loving it! It took me a while to get the hang of it, but my local tobacconist was very helpful. He showed me how to load the pipe and light it so that it stays lit. He also showed me how to avoid tongue bite. But when I asked him about Jess and Lars and Bo and S. Bang, he said he really didn't know. He had heard of them, but that's all."

So I told him about Keith Moore and Uptown's Smoke Shop in Nashville, Tennessee. Keith has a toll-free number (888.292.9576), and he is selling many of these pipes on an exclusive basis all over the country. The young man thanked me and promised to call with an update. The call came four months later.

"I'm in heaven," he said. "I now own pipes by Jess Chonowitsch and S. Bang, and I plan one day to buy a Bo Nordh pipe and a Lars Ivarsson pipe. Even though they cost a lot, they're really not so expensive compared with what I was spending on cigars. Now I'm smoking one cigar a day and one pipe a day, and I figure that over time I'll actually be saving money because, as you said, the pipes will last years and years."

I asked him if he could put into words what makes Chonowitsch and S. Bang pipes so special. "I'm not sure I can," he said. "But I'll try. For one thing, pipes in general offer a different kind of satisfaction than cigars. There is something about puffing and tamping that's just so relaxing! And the variety of pipes and tobaccos is mind-boggling! I mean, it seems like it's infinite. Also, I really liked the fact that when I started, I was the only one smoking a pipe whenever I'd get together with my cigar-smoking buddies. Now I'm one of two, since one of the other guys is smoking pipes as well.

"As for the Jess Chonowitsch and the S. Bang pipes, I don't know where to begin. They were great right off the bat, but the more I smoke them the better they become. Let's say I've had a hard day at work. After I finish dinner I reach for the Bang pipe because it has a bigger bowl and I feel like a longer smoke. I load the pipe carefully, sit back in my favorite easy chair, puff gently, and I can actually feel the tension leaving my body. I just feel totally relaxed. My tobacconist told me that the only detailed study of pipe smoking and mortality showed that pipe smokers outlive nonsmokers by an average of two years. I can see why! Stress kills, and pipe smoking is an unbelievable antidote to stress. No wonder Bertram Russell lived to be 98, and he was never seen without his pipe. My Jess pipe has a smaller bowl, and it feels very light in my mouth when I'm reading a good book. Neither pipe is better than the other. They're different, but they're both great. I really want to thank you for telling me about them."

I said that I appreciated his thanking me, but the ones who deserve the credit are the expert pipemakers. They all started in the 1960s, and they have worked day after day, year after year, consistently improving their skills. They are all in their early to mid-50s. They have seen the demand for pipes fluctuate from very high to very low, and they have followed the marketplace geographically—selling mostly in Switzerland and Germany, then Japan, then Italy, then to a dozen other countries. In the last two years their pipes have become available in the United States, and the demand for them far exceeds their supply. It's what you might expect now that smokers have discovered the perfect pipe. *P&T*

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Unmatched Beauty

Swedish Match's Tobaksmuseet in Stockholm is a Scandinavian delight

by Larry O'Connor

There are tobacco museums larger than the Tobaksmuseet in Stockholm, Sweden. And there are museums with more extensive exhibits. But lovers of antique pipes and other tobacco-related artifacts would be hard pressed to find a more interesting, better organized or more visitor-friendly collection of tobacciana anywhere in the world.

Tobaksmuseet (The Tobacco Museum), is situated on Djurgarden, one of 14 small islands that form the Swedish capital city halfway up the country's Baltic coast. Tobaksmuseet is part of Skansen, the world's oldest open-air museum, a collection of self-standing museums really, which highlight the history and folklife of Sweden. The centuries-old buildings of cultural and historical interest include a farmhouse, pharmacy, book bindery, bakery and many others, most of which are operated by staff dressed in period costume. Skansen also features an authentic replica of a Lapp village, which shows the way-of-life of the reindeer-herding nomads of northern Europe, and a zoo with both native and exotic animals.

But for pipe smokers with either an interest in history or an eye for artistic beauty, the tobacco museum alone is well worth Skansen's price of admission. Tobaksmuseet is housed in "Gubbhyllan," an old country inn, which was built in nearby Hasselbacken in 1820. It was moved to Skansen in 1965 by the Swedish Tobacco Company (now known as Swedish Match, makers of Borkum Riff and other tobacco products) in conjunction with the company's 50th anniversary.

The museum's centerpiece is an exhibit featuring hundreds of long-stemmed clay pipes, some of the more than 300,000 18th century Swedish clays that were discovered in central Stockholm in 1984, in what is believed to be the largest discovery of clay pipes anywhere in the world. The clay pipes were unearthed by construction workers near the site of a new freeway and office building in the Old Town section of Stockholm.

The clays were found in a cellar near the foundation of a Swedish nobleman's mansion in an area of the city that had been decimated by fire in 1759. Many of the pipes found in the early stages of the excavations had been baked by the intense

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An exhibit of 18th century clay pipes unearthed in Sockholm in 1987 highlights the museum's collection. A 1-meter-long 19th century horn pipe (left) sports two humorous figureheads.

heat of the fire into lumps of lime. And other pipes, which were originally white, had taken on blue or earth-colored hues from the secondary baking they underwent during the fire.

The pipe bowls had various imprints including Stockholm's coat of arms, the shape of a heart or three crowns. And many were stamped "OF," for Olof Forsberg, one of Sweden's largest pipemakers at the time.

Although tobacco use had spread to Sweden by the early 1600s, Sweden did not have its own clay-pipe makers until the early part of the 18th century. (The first European clays were made in England in the late 1500s. Later production was centered in Holland.) And by the end of the century, clays would be for the most part replaced by the arrival of meerschaum.

Forsberg himself did not enter the pipe business until 1739. His manufacturing facilities, however, which were founded by another pipemaker who went bankrupt, were Sweden's oldest. But Forsberg's factory was located in the southside of Stockholm, across town from where construction workers made their discovery. And curiously enough, there was no record of any other pipe factories in the vicinity of the find.

Archaeologists might have been left scrambling for clues as to how the pipes made their way to the Old City, but two price lists for clay pipes that surfaced in the Swedish Royal Archives just a few months earlier unraveled the mystery. It seems Forsberg had contracted Elias Dufwenberg and Anders Nordstrom, two Swedish merchants, as his sales agents. The pair had a tobacco manufacturing operation close to the spot where the pipes were found, and the cellar was apparently part of one of their warehouses.

In addition to its fine clay exhibit, Tobaksmuseet also houses a functioning tobacco factory that utilizes some of the world's oldest cigarette-making machinery. And the museum has various cigar and cigarette accessories on display, including ashtrays, lighters, and tobacco tins and boxes. There is even a replica of an 1880s-era Swedish gentleman's smoking room.

Most of the museum's pipes are the property of Swedish Match, and actually just a representative sampling of the company's overall pipe holdings stored at its headquarters in Stockholm.

The emphasis of the collection is on the pipe history of Sweden—not necessarily pipes manufactured in Sweden, but pipes traditionally smoked there.

In addition to its holding of Swedish clays, the museum has numerous pipes that show the progression of materials from porcelain and clay through meerschaum and various types of wood.

Of particular interest is a large late-18th-century clay in the likeness of Swedish King Gustav III, made in commemoration of a bloodless coup d'etat in 1772 and dubbed the "revolutionary pipe." There is also a 19th century 1-meter-long horn pipe of likely German origin with two humorous, roughly carved human faces. The museum also boasts a number of impressive Turkish porcelain pipes, including one delicate pipe with a woman's head and a pink, green and gold turban.

In the International Room, there are also fine examples of other exotic pipes, such as Chinese water pipes, Japanese kiseru pipes and South African gourds. *P&T*

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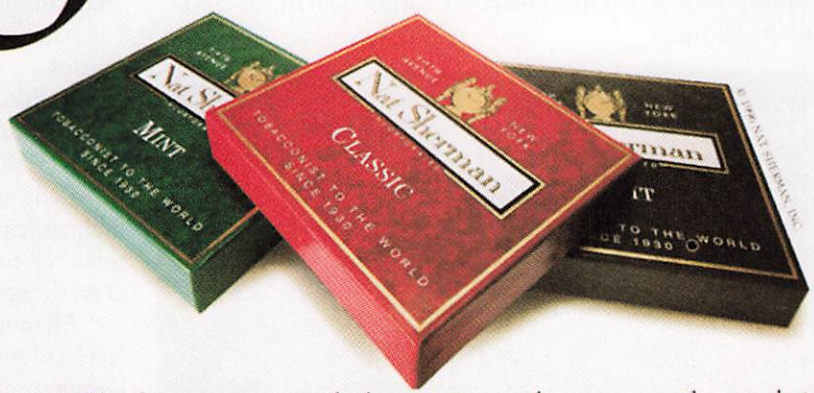

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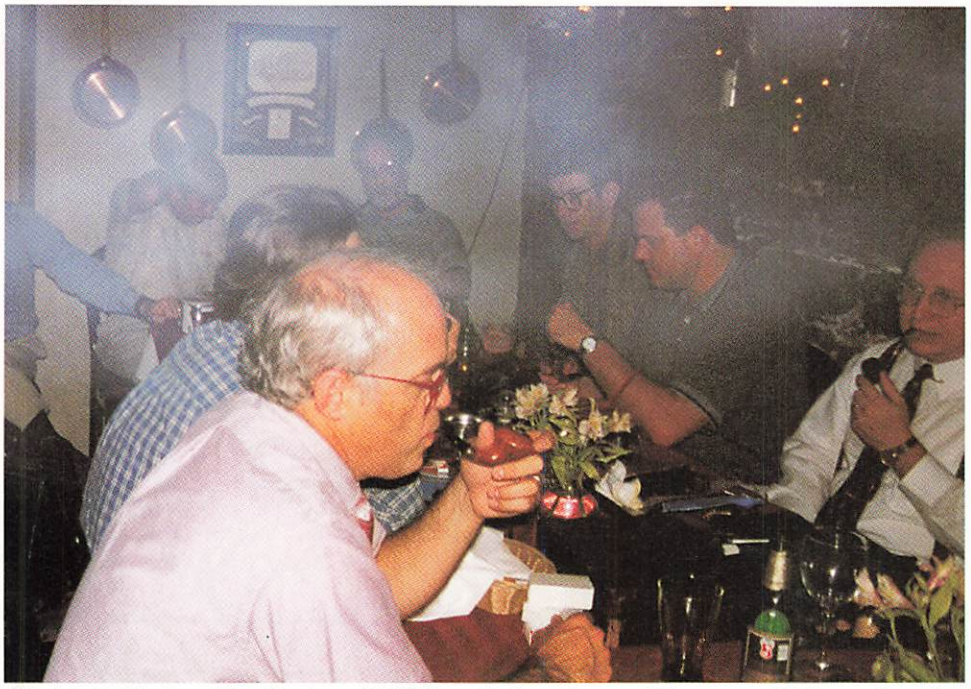
Chicagoland Pipe Collectors Club
1998 International Pipe & Cigar Show, April 19-20, 1998, at the Ramada Inn, Harvey, Illinois. More than 150 tables of exhibitors, collectors, and dealers in antique pipes, briar pipes, tobacciana, cigars and tobaccos. For more information, call Frank P. Burla at 630.434.7144 or Michael Reschke at 630.620.5033.

Conclave of Richmond Pipe Smokers (CORPS)
Thirteenth Annual Pipe Smokers' Exposition & Celebration, Oct. 10, 11 and 12, in Richmond, Virginia, at the Holiday Inn I-64 & West Broad Street. This is one of the most-attended shows of the year. A large auction will benefit children's charities, and there will be a pipe-smoking contest, awards, door prizes and a Saturday Night Smoker. The theme for this year's exposition is Sherlock Holmes. Also celebrated will be McClelland Tobacco's 20th anniversary and Castello Pipe's 50th anniversary. For more information, call the CORPS pipeline at 804.342.0761, or email *CorPipeSmk @AOL.com.*

Dallas/Fort Worth Pipe Smokers Club
This club meets at 7:30 p.m. on the third Wednesday of every month at the Londoner Tavern, 4291 Belt Line Road, Addison, Texas. Contact Ed Price, *epr065@airmail.net.*

Forty-ninth International Association of Pipe Smokers Clubs Show
One-day event at the St. Louis Holiday Inn, Nov. 8, 1997. Retailers' and collectors' tables, a dinner in the evening, and a smoking contest with trophies going to the top five places. For further information, contact Jay Milton at 314.837.5902.



The Nashville Area Pipe Smokers (NAPS) really know how to fill a room with fun and smoke.

New York Pipe Club
Meets the first Tuesday of every month at Muldoon's Pub, 3rd Ave. between 43rd and 44th Streets, at 6 p.m. Dues: $2 per meeting. For further information contact Sailorman Jack, 212.288.3832.

The North American Society of Pipe Collectors
One hundred and fifty members in 23 states and Canada. This club publishes one of the finest newsletters you will find. The last issue featured articles on Paul Bonaquisti, a terrific young pipemaker from New York, and on Samuel Learned, a Pennsylvania pipemaker who is just starting to gain attention. For more information or a complimentary newsletter, contact Bill Unger at 614.252.2904 or *ohio@pipes.org.*

Philadelphia Pipe Club
Meets the third Wednesday of every month at 7:30 p.m. at Chris' Jazz Cafe, 1421 Swansom St.

#pipes
An online, real-time discussion group available any time, but most active after 9 p.m. EST. Actual identities need not be revealed, and participants are known by nicknames. Conversation ranges from tobaccos to pipe collecting to cheese and everything in between.

Members of the group represent all levels of experience, from pipeguy, who knows more about pipes than anyone should (it is suspected he is not human but a pipes database in disguise), to a number of people who have just started pipe smoking.

The channel is available to anyone in the world with Internet access. You will need a shareware program called mIRC, available by going to *http:// www.mirc.co.uk.* Instructions for downloading the program are at this site. (Mac users may need to find a Mac shareware site.) Configure mIRC by clicking FILE and SETUP. Click on a DALnet server. When you get a connec-

tion, a window will open. Type in #pipes.

Sherlock Holmes Pipe Club
Meets the second Wednesday of every month at the Holiday Inn, Mansfield, Massachusetts. For further information contact Steve Smith, *fourdots@aol.com.*

South Florida Briar Brotherhood
The Gold Coast Pipe Show
SFBB's first pipe show is scheduled for Jan. 10, 1998, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Crystal Lake Country Club in Pompano Beach, Florida. The show will feature door prizes, raffles, talks and demonstrations as well as dealer and collector exhibits. Additional show information may be obtained by contacting Skylar Rupp at 561.482.2694 or *Skylar@aksi.net.*

Club meetings are held in the loft of Turtle Run Liquors on West Sample Road in Coral Springs, Florida, at 8 p.m. on the third Thursday of every month. The last issue of SFBB's newsletter, *Smoke Signals*, featured a primer on tobacco types and a piece on fills in briar pipes by Mark Tinsky as well as other entertaining and informative articles. You can subscribe by contacting Ed Faerman at *Smoke Signals*, 3606 NW 84th Ave., Suite 100, Coral Springs, FL 33065, or find the club's Web page at *http://netrunner.net/family/pipe/smokesig.htm.*

Southwest Pipe & Cigar League
1997 West Coast Pipe & Cigar Expo, Nov. 22-23 at the West Coast Anaheim Hotel, 1855 South Harbor Blvd., Anaheim, California. For room reservations call 714.750.1811 and mention the Expo to receive a hotel room discount. Cigar and pipe smoking contests, silent auction, a banquet and guest speakers promise to make this show exciting. For more information call Steve Johnson at 310.398.8798, or email *musiker@leonardo.net.*

Toronto Pipe Club
The inaugural afternoon smoker of the Toronto Pipe Club is to be held on Nov. 22 at 4 p.m. at W.C. Fields' Bar and Grill, 50 Cumberland Street, Toronto. A future newsletter is planned. For further information contact the Toronto Pipe Club, 51 Alexander Street, #1501, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 1B3 Canada, or email dougc@interlog.com.

Triangle Area Pipe Smokers (TAPS)
Pipes and Cigar Exposition, Jan. 10, 1998, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Holiday Inn-Crabtree in Raleigh, North Carolina. $49 room rate for exposition attendees. Activities will include some of the following: Raffles, door prizes, movie stars, miracle healings, collector and dealer exhibits, space shuttle rides, free coffee, live dinosaurs, antiques, demonstrations and tobacco. For further information, call Jim Swindell, 919.872.5040, or fax 919.876.6531.

The Universal Coterie of Pipe Smokers (TUCOPS)
The Pipe Smoker's Ephemeris, which appears approximately twice a year, averages 75-100 pages and is the virtual meeting place for members of the Coterie. Now in its 33rd year, and completely financed by editor Tom Dunn—with the help of contributions from appreciative readers—*The Ephemeris* is stuffed with letters, articles, Sherlockiana and reports on everything pipe-related. This is a must-have subscription for the serious pipe enthusiast. You may obtain a subscription form by writing to Tom Dunn, 20-37 120th Street, College Point, NY 11356.

Wisconsin Briar Friars
Pipe and cigar smokers club. Contact Mark Herman, 1613 N. Peach, Marshfield, WI 54449.

To have your club or show listed in *P&T*, please send pertinent information to *Pipes and tobaccos*, 3000 Highwoods Blvd., Suite 300, Raleigh, NC

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New York Pipe Show

American pipemakers have strong presence at this semi-annual event

Held twice a year, this show keeps getting better. Sam Barnett and Rich Esserman always provide a terrific venue for collectors, pipemakers, retailers, manufacturers and exhibitors. And it's a great place for browsers, too.

The Aug. 29 show was crowded most of the day, and plenty of pipes and accessories changed hands. Of special note were the four pipemakers who attended and showed their pieces.

Mark Tinsky, of the American Smoking Pipe Company, had a large table with about 150 pipes, any of which would make a fine addition to one's collection. Tinsky's natural-colored pipes were especially impressive, all displaying innovative shapes and tight grain patterns. Tinsky's stem work is always flawless, and the balance of each of his pipes guarantees a comfortable smoke.

At the table next to Tinsky, Paul Bonaquisti, of Cohoes, New York, displayed about 50 of his pipes. Bonaquisti is a pipemaker with an excellent record and an even brighter future. He currently carves around 100 pipes a year. His display featured mainly larger pipes, each finished to perfection. While his smooth pipes are exquisite, his rusticated finishes feature a distinctive style that is irresistible. He also showed two remarkable churchwarden-style briars. It is unusual to see these pipes at shows, and Bonaquisti's are stunning.

Clarence Mickles always attends the New York Show, and his display in August was his finest selection yet. Just when you think Clarence Mickles has reached a new level of workmanship, he somehow manages to surpass himself.

In New York he had some new rustications, including a straight up-and-down finish reminiscent of a Randy Wiley style, but with a definite Mickles flair. Mickles is doing things with shank design, rustications, stem craftsmanship and moisture systems that you just don't see anyone else approaching. He displayed a new carburetor innovation built into the pipe stem that cools the smoke while trapping moisture.

The fourth pipe carver in attendance was J.T. Cooke. Cooke rarely attends shows, since he can never keep enough

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1. Title of Publication—PIPES and tobaccos
2. Publication No. 015682
3. Date of Filing—September 30, 1997
4. Frequency of Issue—Quarterly
5. No. of Issues Published Annually – 4
6. Annual Subscription Price—$12.00
7. Complete Mailing Address of the Known Office of Publication—Specialized Agricultural Publications, Inc., 3000 Highwoods Boulevard, Suite 300, Raleigh, NC 27604.
8. Complete Mailing Address of the Headquarters of General Business Offices of the Publishers—Specialized Agricultural Publications, Inc., 3000 Highwoods Boulevard, Suite 300, Raleigh, NC 27604.
9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Address of Publishers—Dayton H. Matlick, 3000 Highwoods Boulevard, Suite 300, Raleigh, NC 27604. Editor—Same.
10. Owner (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If now owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, its name and address, as well as that of each individual must be given. If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, its name and address must be stated.)

Dayton H. Matlick
3000 Highwoods Boulevard, Suite 300
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3000 Highwoods Boulevard, Suite 300
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11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages or Other Securities.

None

12. For Completion by Nonprofit Organizations Authorized to Mail at Special Rates (Section 423.12, DMM only).

No answer required.

13. Publication name—Pipes and tobaccos
14. Issue date for circulation data below—Fall 1997
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation.

	Actual Number of Copies of Single Issue Nearest to Filing Date	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months
A. Total No. Copies	54,396	61,200
B. Paid and/or Requested Circulation		
1. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales	38,094	44,085
2. Mail subscription (Paid and/or requested)	5,850	6,000
C. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Sum of 15B1 and 15B2)	43,944	50,085
D. Free distribution by mail	9,575	9,857
E. Free distribution outside the mail	-0-	-0-
F. Total free distribution (Sum of D and E)	9,575	9,857
G. Total distribution (Sum of C and F)	53,519	59,942
H. Copies not distributed		
1. Office use, left-over, spoiled	877	1,258
2. Return from News Agents	-0-	-0-
I. Total (Sum of G, 1 and 2)	54,396	61,200
Percent paid and/or requested circulation	82.1%	83.6%

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pipes on hand to show—he sells them too fast. He was able to bring 12 pieces to New York, and they got plenty of attention—all but two were sold by early afternoon. It was a privilege to see so many Cooke pipes at one time. With his current backlog of approximately six months, there may never be that many in one place again.

John B. Hayes Tobacconist put out its usual excellent display of new and used pipes—its Ser Jacopo Pictas were especially popular at the show.

The largest display belonged to Robert Hamlin, who had several tables of super high quality new pipes: Castello, Ser Jacopo, Peterson, Ashton, as well as a few Larsons and a couple of Beckers. Hamlin also had a table stacked with his special edition tobaccos, which sold fast because they are excellent blends (and because he was the only exhibitor offering tobacco for sale.)

John Eells had three tables jammed with pipes—boxes and boxes full. It is always an education just to look at Eells' selection. Rob Denholz also provided a huge assortment of reasonably priced pipes.

For Castello fans who like some history, Chuck Rio is the man to see, and he was there with his phenomenal collection. Rio is one of the friendliest men in pipe collecting, with decades of experience, and more than willing to share his knowledge.

Dozens of other collectors, all with wonderful displays, filled the room with enough pipes to satisfy any enthusiast. There were antique and new meerschaums, rare Danish makes, rare Barlings, rare Sasienis, rare Kaywoodies, rare Dunhills—it was a veritable museum.

If you haven't been to a pipe show, you should try to attend one soon. These shows are not just about buying and selling and trading; everyone at these shows also wants to learn more about pipes, and to share what they already know with others. You can have a great time just talking and looking.

The New York Show is an especially convenient show to attend. Just 10 minutes from Newark International Airport, the Ramada Inn runs shuttles to and from the airport every 20 minutes. It is a one-day show, so you can fly in and out on the same day, with no more inconvenience than if you went to your local shopping mall. But a lot more fun. Watch future issues of *P&T* for the date of the next New York Pipe Show. ***P&T***

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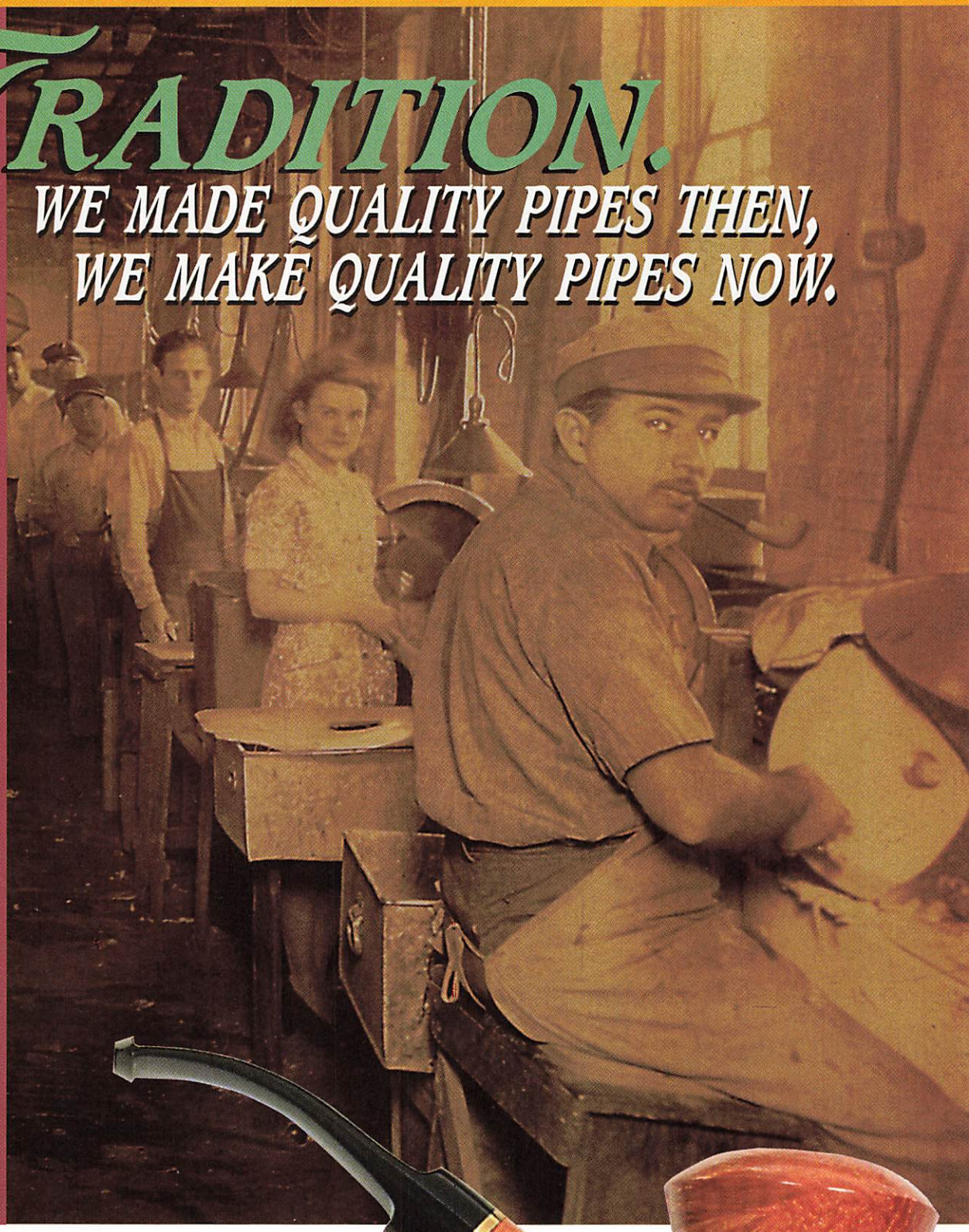

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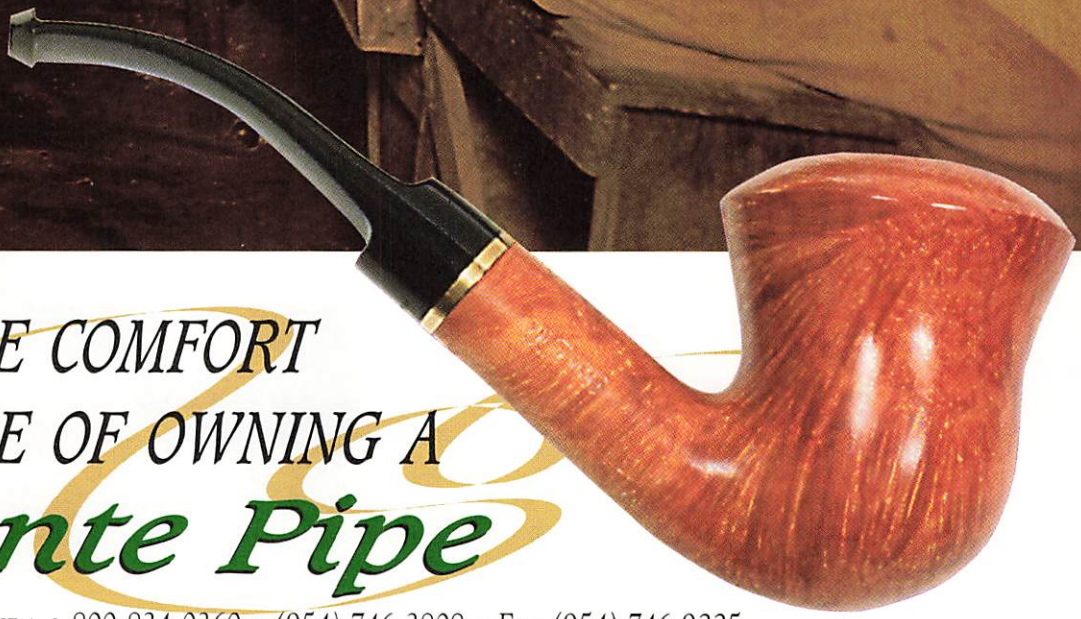

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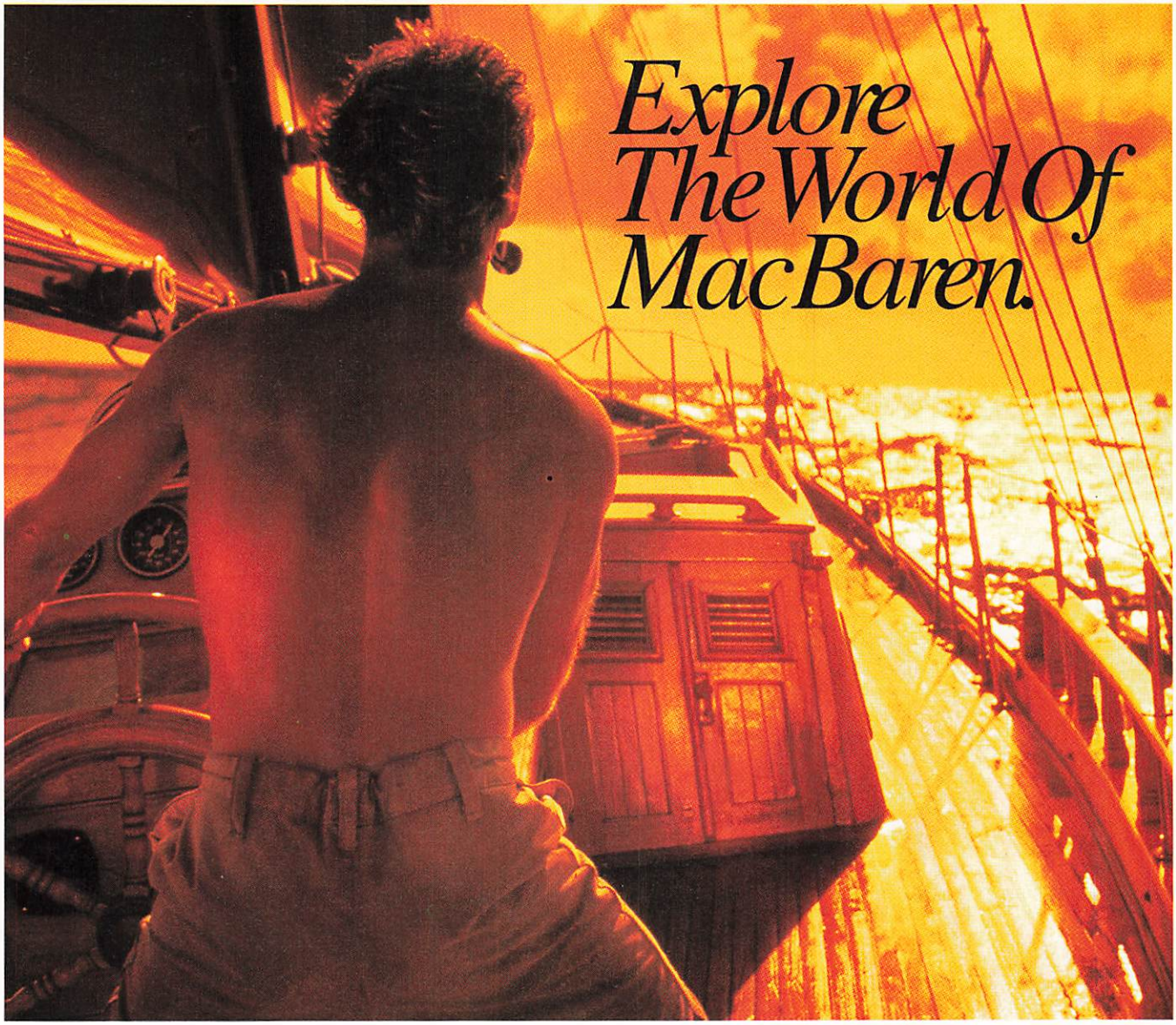

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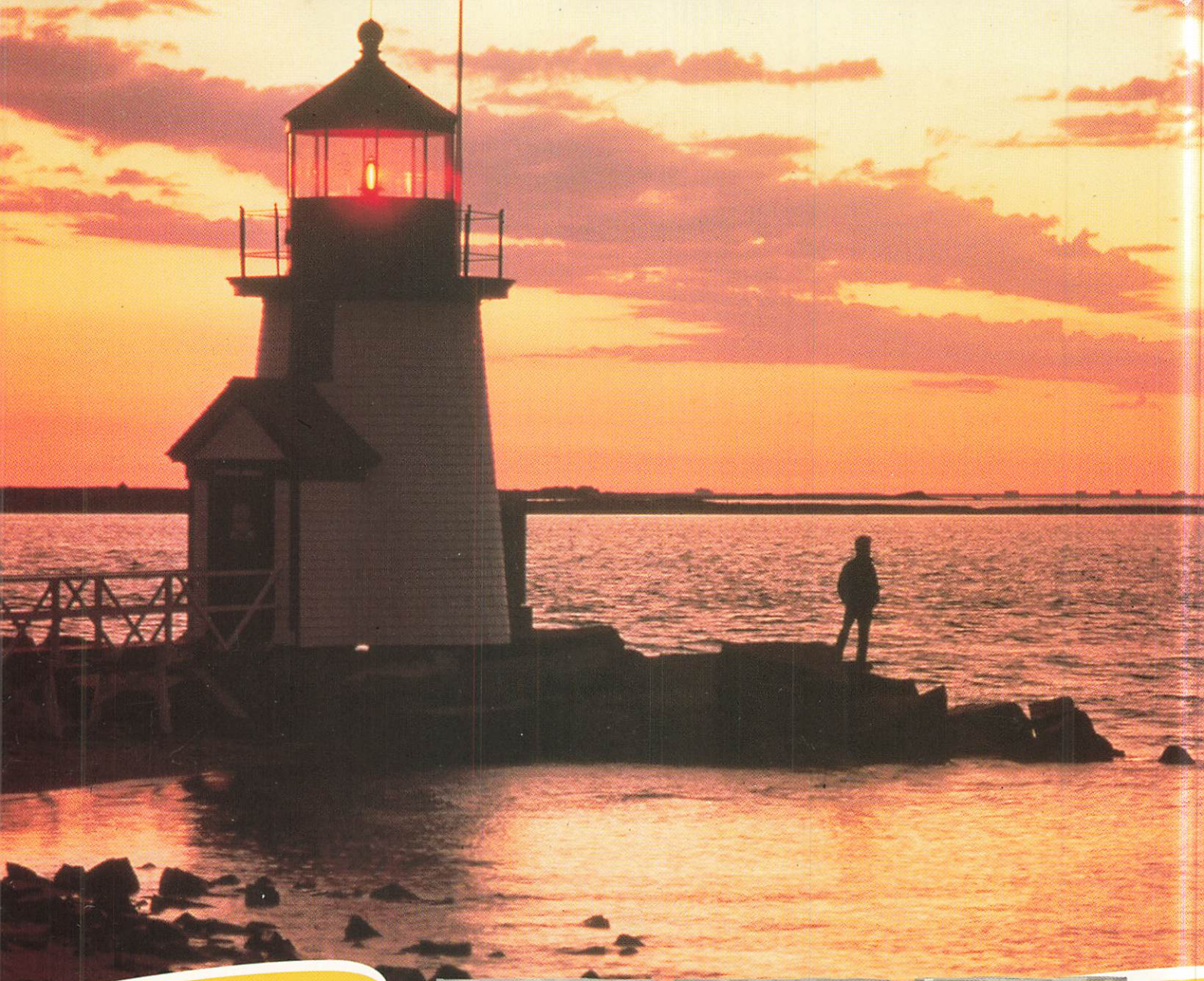

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